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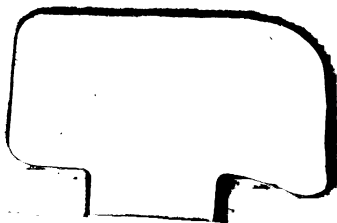
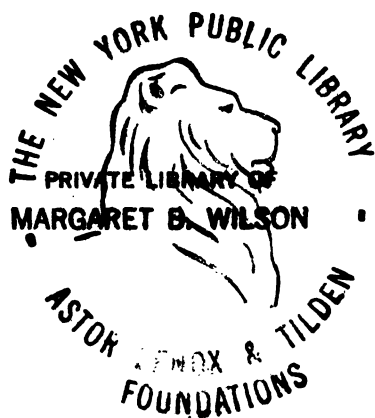


VASSAR STORIES

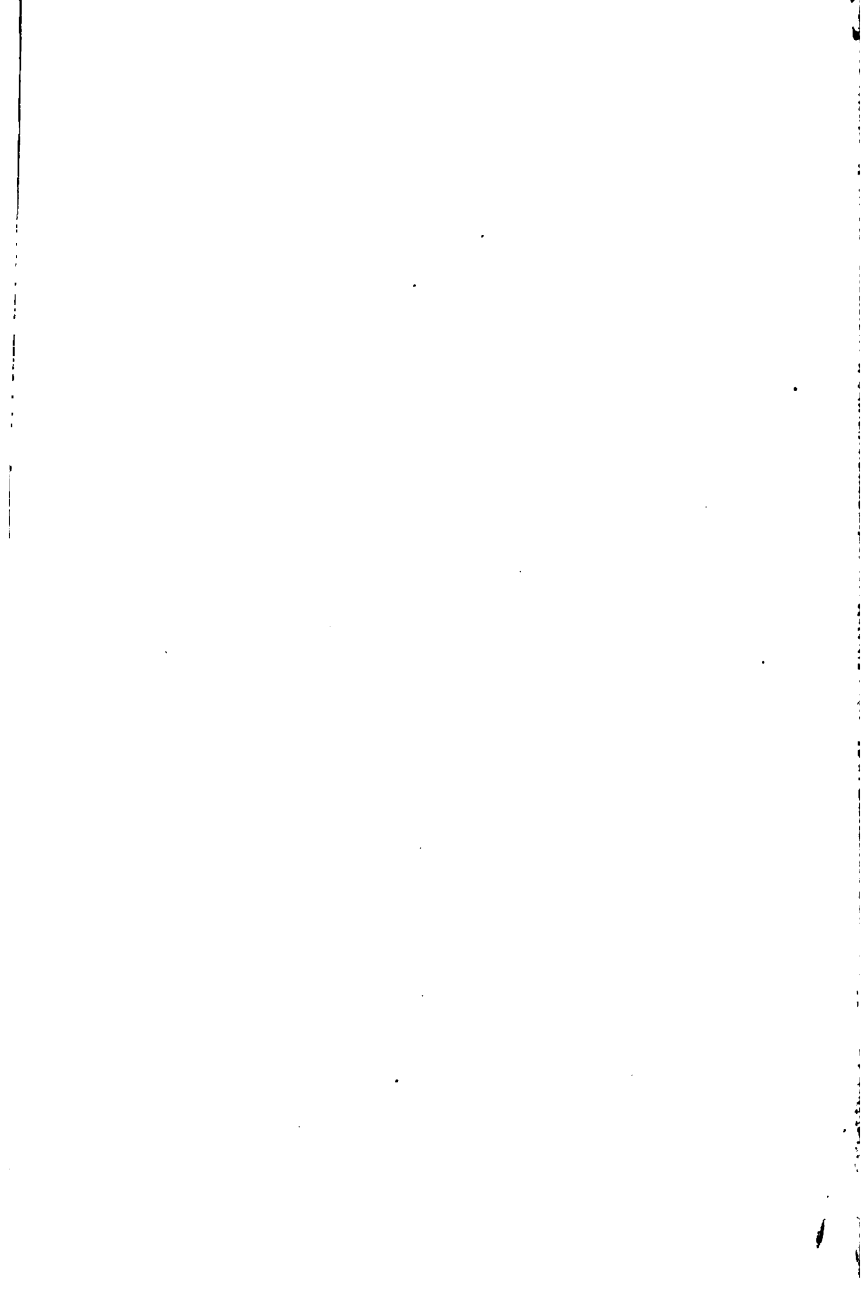


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VASSAR STORIES



DAISY FIELD

Frank B. Carter

VASSAR STORIES

BY MARY MARION F. GALLAGHER

Revised Edition
Edited by F. S. F. F. F.

COVER DESIGN BY
L. B. HAZELTON

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DAISY FIELD

Frank B. Rowland

VASSAR STORIES

THE VASSAR COLLEGE LIBRARY

1



VASSAR STORIES

BY
GRACE MARGARET GALLAHER

Revised Edition
Profusely Illustrated

COVER DESIGN BY
I. B. HAZELTON

BOSTON, MASS., U. S. A.
E. H. BACON AND CO.
294 Washington Street
1907

A few members of the class, with neither rooms, friends, nor the Ninety-blank cheerfulness, felt queer. Molly Omstead was one of them. She sat on a window-sill on the first corridor, watching the rainy night close down over the campus and counting the miles to Oakland, California, where the rest of the Omstead family probably were doing something pleasant just now. There were a great many miles. Molly was just realizing the number. Her trunk had been brought over from Mrs. Norris' that morning, and was now adding its share to the general confusion of the corridor. She would have liked to get her coat out of it, for large draughts floated about, but she could not bring herself to unpack directly in the public thoroughfare. She longed for a room and a room-mate, especially the room-mate.

For Molly was shy, in a brusque, boyish sort of way. She wanted to be friends with everybody, but she didn't just know how. A room-mate would be a friend at once. You cannot very well escape knowing a girl,

when you live in her pocket or she in yours. Molly's sister had kept her first room-mate the whole four years. They were still dear friends. Through your room-mate, too, you grew to know other girls.

Molly watched the groups of girls hurrying about the corridor, trying to guess who was to belong to her. She had decided that she would like the brown bun of a girl whom several others, upper classmen evidently, called Betty, when a slender, fair one, who looked like an old miniature at home, stopped to speak to a man moving a trunk. Molly thought her the most interesting person she had ever met, though she said nothing but "May I have my trunk now, please?" and directions where to take it. When she told the man she had forgotten which floor she lived on, but the number was sixty-nine, Molly's heart bobbed about. She was a Freshman! and perhaps —

Molly hurried off to the office to see if by any chance she, too, lived in sixty-nine. No room yet. She must wait. She wandered

into Henriette Knight's room, the corridor was getting so dark and homesick. Henriette was a summer acquaintance who suddenly seemed to Molly, in her loneliness, a valued friend. Her mother was helping her settle her single, a slit in the second north wall. Henriette, her mother, and the furniture were all sizable affairs that sufficiently crowded the tiny room without the addition of a tall, broad-shouldered girl. They were good to Molly, however, and tried not to make her feel in the way. "Don't move, please, we can pass you." "Just bend forward one instant, this book-case must go there." "If you could sit a little further over, we could put the desk in that corner." Molly stayed till it became a question of her going out or the bureau not coming in.

She hunted up a Senior who had known her sister when the latter was a Senior and the former a Freshman. She was not in. Her room was held by strange girls, who sat on trunks, the floor, and one another, and who were so loftily indifferent to one Freshman more or less that Molly hurried

away lest the thought of her own minuteness in the scheme of Vassar overcome her utterly.

The reading-room looked literary, but not exactly homelike, the library was unfriendly, and the college parlors distinctly hostile. Molly sought the office for the sixth time that afternoon, this time not in vain. Some one handed her a key, saying, "You are to room in number sixteen, Main, and your room-mate is a Freshman."

Those who have never roomed in sixteen, north Main — well, let them give thanks. It is a double. Molly had heard of a "shoot." Her first glance into the long, narrow, dark room convinced her that no such brisk title applied. A crawl was the pace at which that room would have travelled. There seemed to be a paucity of chairs, indeed of furniture of any kind, and the walls had a spotty appearance. But the room-mate had come. Nothing else mattered.

She sat close to the window in a huddled position, suggestive of chills and tears. Molly lighted the gas. Then she wished

she had left the room dark. It was such a blow! The room-mate was moist, and dank, and crumpled, and crumbly in all sorts of unexplainable ways. Molly's perceptions were not keen, yet even she knew at once that the room-mate was an impossible person. A big, rosy, vigorous girl herself, she shuddered at the unwholesome little creature before her. She was so "'umble" when Molly began to talk to her that the latter named her "Uriah Heep" at once. "Miss Stowe" was her right name, "Carrie Stowe, if you like."

"Just as if," wrote Molly to her sister that night, "I didn't like, she'd get a new one."

Molly described Miss Stowe further as "a loathsome beast, and cries without any pocket handkerchief." She said much more about her the next day, and the next, for Molly, after the manner of Freshmen, the first half of the year wrote a letter home every day, a fat one that took two postage stamps. Later, the letters were less frequent, and were something like this:—

Dear Peeps,— O.K. Hope you are. Grand weather. Awfully busy. Wish I could see you. Stacks and hoards of love. MOLLY.

P.S.—Do you think grandma would think me a nervy cit if I send her my stockings to be darned?

P.S. No. 2.—Please send my winter flannels. I'm perishing. And, say, can't you wrap up some buns and jam in them?

These letters were usually on the back of a hygiene written lesson, whose front bore strange devices of lungs, lights, and livers, or of an algebra paper that looked as if some one had sprinkled it with red ink.

The Omsteads in Oakland, California, grieved over these and said, "She is being weaned from home. She doesn't show any interest in the fire in the north wing, and she hasn't even mentioned old Mrs. Dent's death." This was not true. Molly loved home just as much as ever, and in the coming vacation she would listen enthralled to the feats of daring performed by her family in the fire or to the minutest happenings among the clan.

She had entered a world of such absorb-

ing interest that nothing outside of it could touch her. College may be a small world and a narrow one, but while a girl lives in it she neither knows nor desires any other. The fall of the Chinese Empire moves not a whit her who is striving with all her might to bring about the fall of a too ambitious office-seeker in her own class; and Cecil Rhodes's speech on imperialism leaves cold a heart hot with rage over Prexy's last chapel talk on the powers of the Faculty. Should it not be so? A girl has all her life to live in the world without, but only four short years in college. And, too, it is all her own. The "Olympians," to whose number she herself will be added appallingly soon, are responsible for the outside world, but she alone can make or mar college.

By chapel time Molly had found out that Uriah Heep used hair oil, said "considerable few," read any letters left unlocked, besides having other even more unpleasant customs. Nevertheless, she was nice to the room-mate and the room-mate liked her at once. Every one did.

"Is there something queer about me?" she once asked a friend. "All the Objectionables attach themselves to me. It alarms me."

"Just snub them good once or twice," said the friend.

"Oh!" said Molly.

The Objectionables continued to cling.

Uriah Heep fastened herself to Molly in a limp, clammy sort of way, and would not be detached. They went together to chapel. Who ever forgets the first chapel? The narrow room seems immense and filled with thousands of girls. They are all pretty, radiant, happy girls, too, who never knew a first day, nor were ever friendless Freshmen. The tired, the unhappy, the disagreeable ones make no impression the first night. This is right, for they are the minority. And when they all stand up to sing! Six hundred girls' voices singing "Jerusalem the Golden" or "Abide with Me." Who does not remember that odd, new feeling of being part of a great army of youth and courage which must vanquish the old,

evil things of the world? It is a dim perception, gone in a breath, and yet does not its effect stay forever? As the hymn ended in a low Amen, Molly sank on her knees for the prayer.

"Are you a Catholic?" shrilled Uriah Heep in her ear.

The next day, Sunday, they went to church together; they dined together; they walked together; they talked together; they walked together again. Then Molly escaped to Henriette for rest and fresh air. When she returned, Uriah Heep reproached her, weeping.

"I thought you'd deserted me."

Molly took her, by way of making atonement, to supper with the Seniors, though only she herself had been invited and she blushed with shame to seem so fresh. The rest of the evening she read the Bible to Uriah, because the latter disapproved of "novels" on Sunday. This put Uriah to sleep, which would have been a blessing if it had not done the same for Molly.

The morning allotment of classes put

Uriah in Molly's sections. That delighted young person planned her day so that every minute of it should be passed in Molly's society.

Once only did Molly escape. She went with Henriette to put the latter's mother on the cars. While they waited at the Lodge, they watched the joy with which the motor-man banged his bell at intervals, so that dignified professors and slow-pacing students might jump, and run, and fall all over themselves to catch a car not going for ten minutes yet. Henriette's brother, who had appeared to assist at the unpacking after everything was unpacked, was making Molly promise him a number of dances at Phil. and Molly was thinking, "he's the last man-body I shall see in weeks," but without sorrow, for Vassar's all-sufficiency was working within her, when some one squeezed in between them and a breathless voice gasped,

"I've looked everywhere for you."

It was Uriah Heep.

For five weeks Molly lived as did the Siamese twins. Then the Limpet — Molly had rechristened her — announced,

"I'm going to room with Abby Whitely."

The young woman named was an obscure member of the class, who had acquired fame by translating "*deos pietate propitiant*" "they appease the gods with a pie."

"Does she know you?" asked Molly, feeling that otherwise Miss Abby must be warned.

"Oh, yes, we meet in Gyms."

Molly had steadily cut Gyms, as it was her only chance for freedom. She did not inquire by what method the pie girl had disposed of her former room-mate, but awaited with a thankful heart the coming of the new inmate of number sixteen, Miss Hildegarde Huntington, a Special from one of the cottages.

"Her name's agin' her," she thought, "but any one's better than that grewsome Limpet."

Miss Hildegarde's arrival was preceded by that of a trunk of drummer-like size. Molly and her neighbors speculated on its contents.

"Paris gowns," suggested one. "Her name sounds as if she were a terrible dressy bit."

But she was not. At least, not on first appearance. She was a comfortable contrast to the bedraggled Limpet, however, being lively, independent, and as crisp as a fresh apple.

"No, thank you," in answer to Molly's offer of assistance in unpacking. "I have very few clothes, they hamper the mind."

She whisked a few garments out of the trunk, and shut down the lid.

"Lawk! what's in there?" thought Molly, "it's uncanny like."

"My collection of biology specimens," said Hildegarde just as if Molly had spoken; it had a sort of *Alice in Wonderland* effect, "I collected them at Woods Holl last summer." She began to exhume various large jars carefully swathed in cotton. "My set of frogs," as if they were shirt-studs, "six young toads; my rattlesnake,—what's the matter?"

"Take them away! Take them away! The nasty things!"

"They're dead, child, I killed them myself last summer."

"What do I care if they are! It's the sight — Oh, *don't!*"

Hildegarde was prodding the most loathy frog with her fingers.

"If you knew how silly a great, grown-up girl like you looks hopping about and shrieking, you'd never do it again," said the scientist with perfect calm, "but of course if you don't like them I'll shut them up. I hope you'll take Junior biology, you need it to give you balance."

Molly's golf boots were clumping down the corridor, so she did not hear. She had gone to tell her friends that she had a delirium tremens outfit in her room, and that there were worse things even than having one's letters read.

In the evening when Molly returned to make peace with the enraged biologist she found Hildegarde had forgotten the whole affair in a properly controlled joy over somebody's new psychology.

Molly was sorely puzzled over this roommate. She was perfectly good-tempered always, and helpful in all difficulties, yet she

would not let the simplest remark pass unchallenged, and she would argue far into the night on whether one should get out of bed backwards or sideways. Molly was happily too ignorant of the guild to know that Hildegarde was a person with a mission—to reform the world. There are many such among the young of both sexes. They either go into Settlements, where the surrounding populace is so used to being experimented upon that it takes no harm, write a book which no one is obliged to read, or “accept their possibilities,” or “their limitations,” or whatever the expression is, and become honored and useful members of society. Those, however, who live with them while they are making up their minds what they will be, suffer many and strange things.

Molly, who was sweet-spirited and joyous, bore with cheerfulness Hildegarde’s “impersonal criticism,” though she wondered how it could be much more personal, but the arguments wore on her. Hildegarde would argue Monday morning, “when just

to be alive is misery, and to have mathematics is very death," on predestination *versus* freewill. She would argue afternoons when Molly came in glowing from basket ball, mindless to aught save a bath and a nap, on Unitarianism *versus* Congregationalism. She would argue evenings, when the room was filled with burblers eager for fun and fudges, on imperialism *versus* the rights of the native to the soil. Worst of all, she would argue on Sundays, when the chances of escaping one's room-mate are at their lowest, on duty, and right, and religion.

Molly was a healthy, normal girl of eighteen, consequently she had few ideas on any subject. She first stared at Hildegarde, then laughed, then grew sullen under the ceaseless worry of having to say something on every subject and then defend that something to the death. She called Hildegarde various evil names, to her face, for "the power of the tongue" descended upon her in her infrequent rages, all of which Hildegarde received with unchanging calm, merely remarking, "Now, don't get heated," or

"Vituperation is not argument." Molly lived in her friends' rooms and longed for vacation.

The trip to Mohonk brought about the eviction of this room-mate.

Somewhere in the gray of a cold October morning a gong sounded clamorously. Girls began calling to one another, "Where's my cape?" "Will I need rubbers?" and big "busses" — barges they call them in Poughkeepsie — began to rumble under the *porte-cochère*. Molly murmured to herself "Mohonk," and turned over to sleep. By nine o'clock she would be grief-smitten to have stayed at home. Just now, however, all motive power was dead. Some one dragged her up, brushed her hair with vigor, buttoned her boots as if they belonged to an enemy, and bundled her, still half asleep, into one of the busses.

"Hildegarde is an old peach, after all," thought Molly as the cold air waked her up. "I'd never be here if she hadn't hustled things up so. I'll argue all day to-morrow on duty to the world or development of the

individual soul the highest motive." This was Hildegarde's choicest theme.

The sky was an Indian red with the after-glow of sunset as the barges rolled up the driveway. Molly stumbled out of hers stiff from the forty-mile drive, dead tired from the day on the mountains, dirty, sunburned, and gorgeously happy. It was not the good outdoor day that leaped and shouted in her blood. It was the just born feeling that she was a member of Vassar College and of the class of Ninety-blank. Some girls seem to have college spirit from the moment they pass under the Lodge, others have to have it fired within them by some especial occasion.

Molly had sung for the first time,—

“Here’s a long life to Vassar,
Wave we her flag unfurled !
Nothing shall e’er surpass her,
Queen of the college world.”

And

“There’s only one college in the world for me,
One Alma Mater, and that is V. C.”

Then, led by the Seniors, the old, old

"An institution once there was of learning and of knowledge,
Which had upon its high brick front Vassar Female College."

And

"If I were President,
I'd be non resident,
And all my energies should be spent
In planning for merriment."

She had sung class songs, too, extemporized by the class poet, songs of doubtful metre but undoubted loyalty. She had cheered for the class and for every member in it till she could cheer no more because her voice was only a croak. She had shared her cape on the cold drive home with the tall Canadian, sat with her arm around the shoulders of the pretty Chicago girl, and talked class politics with the clever girl from New Orleans. She wanted to grab some one and jump up and down and shout.

"Oh, don't you love old College, and Ninety-blank, and — *everything!*"

She contented herself with calling "Good-bye, Belle," "Goodbye, Janet," to girls

whom that morning she had spoken to as Miss This and Miss That. She slammed down the corridor, flung open her door, and cast herself on the couch, crying exultantly, if hoarsely,

“Bully for Mohonk!”

“I wonder,” said Hildegarde Huntington, “if both could be measured, which would be found to be the greater, the pain or the pleasure of life. I think the pain, don’t you?”

Molly sprang up.

“I don’t anything! I know I’ve got to move out, or else you have. I can’t stand any more philosophy, and philology, and psychology, and all those other borey things you dote on.”

“I agree with you,” said Hildegarde, the placid. “You need a girl of your own immature kind, and I certainly need one who can talk with me.”

Thereupon she sought another room, and with Hildegarde to seek anything meant to find it always.

Molly’s perceptions in regard to room-

mates seemed blunted after this. Another cottager succeeded Hildegarde. The new girl was lovely in Molly's eyes because she could not argue if she tried. When she left because of illness, Molly grieved sincerely. The fourth room-mate was as entertaining as a play, but she considered College a land where it is always afternoon, and, the Faculty having other views on the subject, she departed before the Finals. The fifth had a parrot and "a tendency to throw things when violent, and that frequent." Molly's friends, foreseeing murder or nervous prostration for her, secured a single for the room-mate. The sixth was "an earnest student," who couldn't stand company or noise.

It was during the reign of this last that the spring drawing for rooms took place. If there is any suspense like that which precedes the drawing for rooms, may the writer be spared it! At least one hundred out of every class must have singles. Their lives will be blighted else. As there are only twenty-seven singles allotted each class,

much sorrow is inevitable. After all the parlors and doubles have been drawn, half of them by people who don't want them, a few girls still remain roomless, clasping blanks with tragic faces. This does not mean that these luckless ones will have no rooms at all, but they cannot be convinced that night that college has any use or place for them. It is not especially cheerful, at the best, to be assigned a room and a roommate, or to be poked into a parlor to fill it up. The scenes in the corridor after the drawing are dismal.

A hubbub of voices sounded in the lecture-room the night of the drawing. A shout greeted Molly as she entered, above which Sally Dean's voice could be heard.

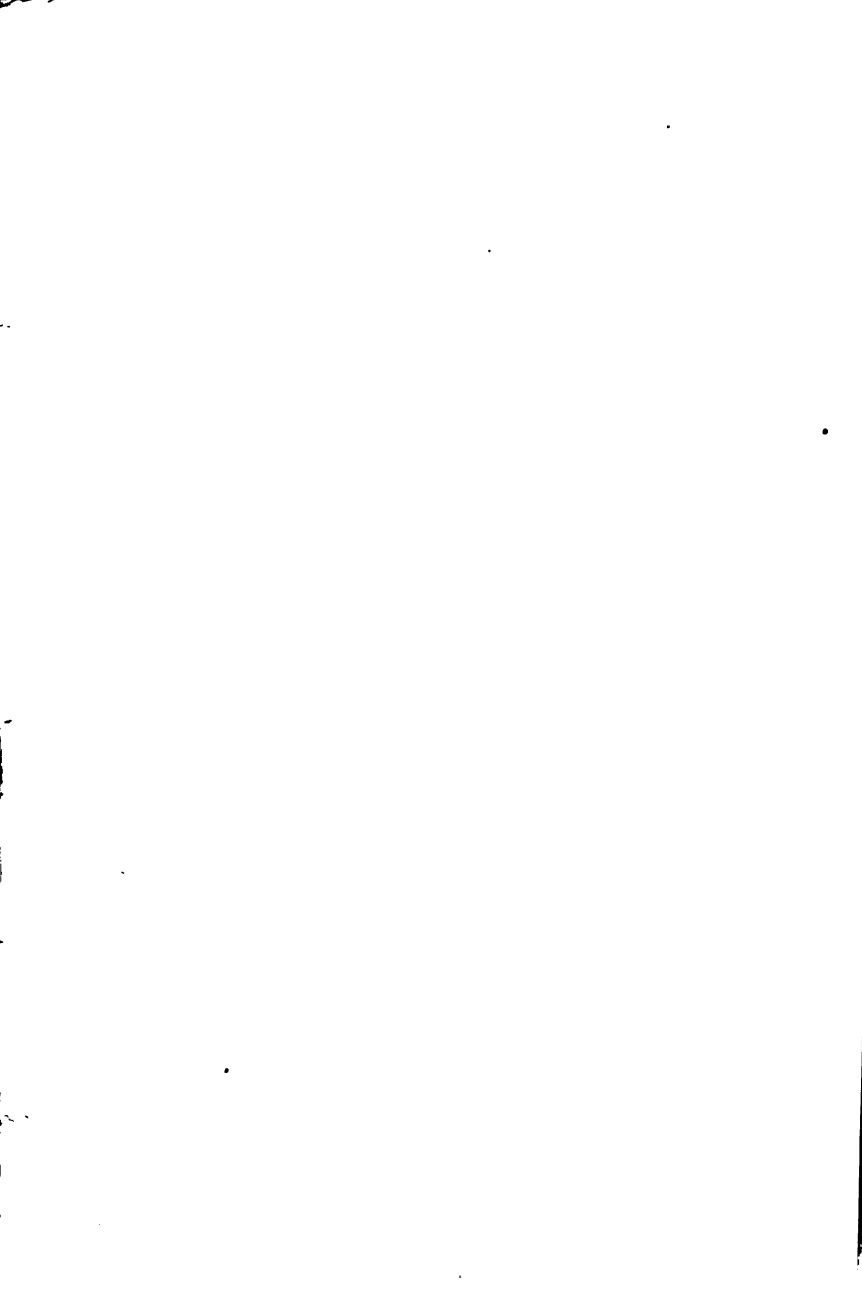
"O Mary Ann, we've whacked up a deal, Lou, Sarah, Barbara Sterling, and I, so you'll get your single. We're going into a firewall. Three of us will draw for it, that's enough, and one can draw for you."

"But no one can draw for me, Sal."

"Not right for you, but if she gets it then we'll take you in the firewall, and you can exchange back into the single, see?"



Poughkeepsie Bridge





Poughkeepsie Depot

"E-r — yes, I reckon so." But Molly didn't see at all.

"If you neither of you get singles, you can draw for doubles, and exchange into —"

"Don't listen to her, Molly," interrupted another girl, "she's growing feeble-minded over room permutations and combinations. Do you think we'll all make for Strong the way the Sophomores did?"

"I hope not!" cried a third. "I love old Main."

"Have you heard about the Sophomores? That Von Beck crowd, those fierce girls that live around me, have drawn all the good rooms. They've gone to Strong in a wad. Kate Palubits, May Herrick, and the rest of them, are furious because they're fobbed off with those tucked-up places in Fifth Centre and the Towers."

"Last year," it was a pompous little girl who spoke, "my sister had just two choices, an excellent room in Strong, and a wretched little one on First. She selected the little one because she thought all her friends were to be there, too. Then all the rooms were

changed about so she found herself entirely alone, no one she knew nearer than Fourth."

"Think how forlorn!"

"I guess I know," spoke up a girl who was balancing on the back of a seat. "I call my house Lonesomehurst, nobody for miles but Seniors. They're so wrapped up in their own might, majesty, and dominion, they don't know I exist, even."

"If any one gets a single, it's just got to be you, Molly Omstead, you've been chivied about by room-mates long enough." Barbara Sterling put her arm around Molly and hugged her. She had been through a queer room-mate experience herself.

"Do you know, girls, people think I'm such a oner nobody can live with me. I heard that Miss Mapes in our class say, 'Six room-mates in one year is really suspicious.'" Molly's voice was plaintive.

"So it is. So it is, Miss Molly. We all think so." Sally Dean hugged Molly's neck till she pulled her hair down.

"That Miss Mapes—" began Barbara, but Betty Blake cut in with,

"If I don't get a room and am put in with any one, it's going to be the Mother of the Gracchi, I feel it in my bones. Look at her, doesn't she have the most virtuous Roman matron air? and that '*coiffure*,' as she calls it, don't you know Cordelia wore one just like it?"

"Perhaps you mean Cornelia, if you refer to Mrs. Gracchus' first name. I don't mind her hair as much as I do her habit of stopping you and saying: 'Isn't it wonderful! strange! mysterious!' 'What?' 'Oh, life, nature, eternity.' I think she lacks several portions of gray matter, myself," said Barbara.

"I'd rather have her than that Miss Sands. What do you think she told me the other day? 'I'm immoral and I am proud of it,'" said Molly.

"Don't start such a scandalous report," laughed Barbara. "She said she was unmoral. There's a slight difference between them."

"Well, I don't—" but the entrance of Mrs. Kendrick, with the urn of fate, other-

wise a black silk bag, stopped further conversation.

Molly looked around the room. Every girl, from Georgia Oberley, who was such a grind she hadn't even a picture on her wall for fear it should distract her mind, to Sally Dean, who lived in the corridors, wore an anxious look. So much hung on the event. Outsiders may say that on a girl's physical and mental strength depends her college success. Not a bit of it. It is on her room and her room-mate.

Molly went first. She drew a blank three times! No room of her own! A room-mate! On the stairs and in the corridors girls were storming at their bad luck or silently making an effort to "grin and bear it," according to their natures. Here and there a group close drawn around a figure marked the effort to hide the collapse of some once hopeful spirit. Molly tramped downstairs, into the cool spring night. Her disappointment was a bitter one. She wanted to get outdoors with it.

The Sophomore room was a Tower, one

with pink paper and a red carpet, but the room-mate was soothingly neutral. To be sure, she irritated Molly by her lack of class spirit, as when she had a chance to learn the secret of the Trig ceremonies, but declined because she was "too busy" to take time to hear it told, and when she refused to go to a class meeting where every vote counted, saying, "It doesn't matter to me who's elected." It all mattered terribly to Molly from class president to new history note-books, for wasn't it a part of College? and wasn't College the world?

However, she was amiable, liked to be by herself, took quantities of baths, and had other agreeable traits, some one of which had been lacking in the other room-mates. Molly really missed her when she was forced to go home in December.

The never-failing cottage supply sent up a Freshman to fill the vacancy. This Freshman was bright, interesting, and nice. In three weeks Molly hated the very sound of her little boots. She would have worked for a change, had not pride restrained her. Other

people besides the disagreeable Miss Mapes might think her a "oner."

"So for a season they fought it fair,
She and his cousin May,
Talented, tactful, debonair,
Decorous foes were they —"

in public. In private there was nothing either decorous or debonair about their methods.

Molly, in looking back on the year, could never account for its unhappiness. Perhaps it was because Mediæval History and Trig got on her nerves. She had never supposed she possessed those last till after she had spent hours, precious hours which belonged to skating and golf, in quest of the three sources of the Holy Roman Empire, or in locating forty-eight angles in various quadrants, "left to the ingenuity of the student."

She longed, hoped, prayed for a single. "But it's just my luck to get left again." She fell to watching all the Objectionables of the class, thinking, "Which one'll I get next year?"

However, Ganesh, god of Luck, is sometimes as inconsistent as though he were a goddess. Molly drew third choice in singles, and a great repast at Smith's was the celebration thereof.

The single was not much to look at. The washstand had to be removed to the corridor every night if she wished room to go to bed without peril, and the paper and the curtains said rude things to one another. Molly thought it a beautiful room. She revelled in it. She even forsook her real home, the great outdoors, for three whole days in order to furnish it worthily. She sat up till two and slept till ten, piled all her belongings in the middle of the floor, cooked agreeable foods at strange hours, had a "subscription ball," five cents a head, twice a week, in order that she might make really true to herself her independence. Most of all she enjoyed just the aloneness of it all. Each of her room-mates had possessed the vice — in Molly's eyes — of being always in the room. She sometimes wondered if they ever went to any lectures. She could never re-

member entering the room without finding a room-mate there. Now a beautiful silence and solitude could be all her own whenever she chose to hang out "Asleep,"—"Engaged" was no protection to her. Sometimes she hid herself behind that barricade, stretched herself on her couch, and let the aloneness soak way into her.

One October night, a month after college opened, Molly walked over to Strong, collecting girls as she went. The Juniors were on the steps of Strong, singing. Molly did not sing much herself: she always liked to be where there was any noise being made, however.

It was Friday night. The lecturer on "Some Aspects of" something had kindly remained at home. The air was as mild as August. Every one felt idle and jolly.

Junior year is the happiest one of the whole college four. The long pull and the strong pull of the first two years is over. The dullest student knows that, unless of wanton choice, she need never grind again. It is the time to work leisurely and pleas-

urely over some subject that especially interests you, and to find out what you are good at. It is the time, too, to take long rambles about the country, to explore the hidden, pretty parts of the campus, to make acquaintance with the approachable members of the Faculty, to get up close to your class, and to make life-long friendships,—the time, in short, to do all the things which make Vassar Vassar and not, as it is called in the prayers of the visiting clergy, “an institution of learning.” The bustle and importance of Sophomore year are over, the responsibility and Ethics of Senior yet to be. The Juniors are no account in the estimation of the college. The Juniors are more than willing. They are idle, careless, jolly, and happy.

The Juniors, sitting on Strong steps, understood all this, even if they had never thought it out. They sang rejoicefully, their arms around one another's necks, their heads resting on each other's shoulders. Some one had a mandolin, some one else a banjo. A few had good voices, the others did well as

padding. Between the songs everybody talked, and laughed, and joked. Occasionally the leader, who had a mind always bent on thoroughness, scolded because they laughed in the midst of a song or didn't sing well. When other songs failed, some one would strike up America's new national hymn, "There'll be a hot time in the old town."

A girl was singing behind Molly. Her voice was only a pipe, but it had a pathos in it that "touched you where you live." Molly turned her head to see the singer. It was Georgia Oberley. Georgia was the typical grind, pale, worn, and nervous. No one knew her. In her Junior year her class were still calling her Miss Oberley. Molly had sat beside her in class by reason of alphabetical arrangement, and had found her nice about lending paper, pencils, and other necessities. Molly always caught a class on the fly, so to speak, as she ran in from skating or basket ball, and so never was furnished with the munitions of war. Georgia had a pleasant face. She dressed artistically,

too, in a quiet way. Molly herself never felt at ease except in a high-collared shirt waist and a tie bought by her brother,—“because girls don’t get the right kind,”—yet she liked the way Georgia harmonized with her clinging wools and soft muslins.

“What are you doing here?” she asked at the end of the song.

“Singing,” answered Georgia with a smile for the bluntness of the question. Then, as if some explanation really were due, “I have a headache. I hoped the air would do me good. I’ve got to cut deep over Greek.”

“I kept up my Latin,” said Molly, at which some one, overhearing her, began to murmur a verse from the *Vassarian* :—

“Lullaby, oh, lullaby,
Now the Latin hour is nigh.
Know your lesson? No, not I.
Those who work the sooner die,
Lullaby, oh, lullaby.”

They sang again. Then some one remembered she was due at a spread, some one else that her friend had a guest, and

others recalled different engagements. So the singing broke up.

"Come to walk a bit," said Molly, her hand on Georgia's shoulder. She did not know why she asked her. Georgia's startled nod did not surprise her. She pitied the girl, somehow, she looked so tired and lonely.

"That's my nice old house," said the big Junior as they passed a corner of Main.

"You don't mean to burn up a professor," the little Junior pointed to the dark window. The other laughed at the old saying that if the girls would save on the gas bills College might have another member on the Faculty.

"I don't care about any professor," said Molly. "I don't like to use up the good air in the room. I always open the window, too."

"You can. You live alone."

"Helloa," said Molly, stopping in the path, "are you stuck with a room-mate? You know I had the seven plagues of Egypt in my room." She laughed, for her troubles never embittered her.

Georgia looked up at the round, brown face so far above hers. She remembered hearing the girls quote Kipling's remark about Californians to Molly, "hearts as big as their boots." She had a kind voice, this girl like a boy, and her wide-apart gray eyes were candid, like a child's. Georgia felt a great longing to confide in some one.

"It's awful, Miss Omstead," she burst out, "I can't stand my life here. I'm not like most of the girls, I don't care for parties, or athletics, or the class, or any of the things they get so excited about. I just want to study. That's what I came for and I love it. I have to, of course. I'm going to teach, and I need all the honors and prizes I can get. You know outsiders set so much more value on those things than we do," deprecatorily.

"I'd think a heap of them, too, if I could ever get one," said honest Molly.

"I think I'm a real student. I can study and study weeks on just one little fine point."

"Like the Latin professor who specialized on the first declension and when he died

groaned, 'Oh, if I'd only devoted my life to the dative case.'"

"Yes, like that. I have to have a quiet place to work, though. I'm not strong and I get nervous easily. I suppose I overwork. My Freshmen and Sophomore years I had a single, but this year I drew a blank. I'm in a parlor with two Freshmen. They are the most selfish, unkind girls I ever knew." Georgia's voice trembled. "They have the room full of people all the time, they sing and talk and play the banjo till I'm wild. I've tried to get another room, but so many names are ahead of mine, I won't have an opportunity till spring. I'll have to leave by then, for I can't stand it much longer. I've worked so hard to get here, too, and I'll never have another chance! All I ask of college is a quiet place to work —" she stopped abruptly.

Molly sat down on the steps of Music Hall, to which they had walked.

"I'm sorry about it," she said brusquely, "hope you'll get another room, some way. Don't you think you'd better go in? That's

the bell. I'm going to take a cut out here awhile. Good-night."

Georgia walked away, her head erect.

"So much for bothering any one with your troubles," she thought bitterly.

Molly looked up steadily at the sky. She wasn't thinking at all. She was just letting the night and the far, far away stars straighten her out. It was like what Tess of the D'Urbervilles called "looking at the sky till you see your soul rise in the air." She loved outdoors. "You never feel stuffy and fussy there."

After a while she did think about Georgia. What a neddy she was to miss all the fun, and the girls, and the class, just for more Greek and Latin! It was mighty nice to have prizes and honors and know a lot if you could do it like Sarah Ralph or Mary Holden, who had as much fun and as many friends as anybody in college. But if you had to grind for it like a slave, and get thin and blue and never get a chance to play — Well, anyhow, it was what made Georgia happiest. "All I ask of college is a quiet

place to work," her voice shook like anything when she said that, and there were tears in her eyes.

Two tears ran down Molly's own cheeks, but not in pity for Georgia. Then she cried, bent over till her face was hidden in her lap. Molly did not cry any oftener than a boy. It meant a good deal when she did. After that she watched the stars till the darkening of college warned her to go in.

Once in her room she lighted the gas and lay down on her couch.

"I'll have one grand alone cut," she said, "then I'll tell Georgia Oberley in the morning she can have this room for keeps. I don't believe there's a room-mate living, or a pair of them, can hurt me. I'm fire-proof."

By and by she turned out the gas. She did not go to sleep, however. Her thoughts could not have been unhappy ones, though, for she smiled to herself in the dark contentedly.



College Gateway

THE MOULDERS OF PUBLIC OPINION

The Moulders of Public Opinion

THE celebrated lecturer had sent his assistant to take his place. He was a well-meaning young person, and he strove valiantly to adapt his lecture to what he conceived to be the needs of a woman's college. He left the subject of journalism in general, in which he was really entertaining, to tell long, inspiring stories of the success of Miss Smith on *Harper's Bazar* and Mrs. Jones on *The Ladies' Home Journal*. His hearers smiled patiently.

"Man, man," murmured a girl in the front seat, "we are human beings if we are women."

"They are all alike," returned the girl beside her, "lecturers, ministers, professors. I haven't heard a human being sermon since the one that Englishman preached, where he called us 'dear brethren' and 'Christian

young men.' He said afterwards it was written for some men's guild in England, but 'it really applies anywhere, me dear.' Nice old party!"

"Hush! Listen!"

The lecturer was giving practical advice.

"Excellent training for journalistic life may be gained by undergraduates of any college by work on the various periodicals of the institution. The function of the college magazine is larger than the discipline of those engaged in its preparation, however. It should have a high and broad influence on the college life. The editors of such a magazine owe to their fellow-students the greatest deliberation and the utmost care in its preparation; for they are, in the old phrase, the 'moulders of public opinion.'"

The two *Miscellany* editors present grinned joyously at one another and at "their fellow-students."

"Come on, thou moulder of public opinion," said one of them as the audience left Chapel at the end of the lecture.

"We've got to put the *Miscellany* to bed, you know."

"Hang the *Miscellany*!" said the other, with gloomy rage. "I'm tired as a little dog. I want to go to bed. Let's send it off to-morrow noon."

"No, sir, we've never been an hour late to the printers yet. We're not going to break our record now. Besides, to-morrow morning isn't long enough time. We've got to take an all-nighter," answered the other, the editor-in-chief.

The sub drooped visibly as she gazed on her chief. The latter did not bear the appearance desirable in the companion of one's midnight toils. She was suffering from what she called, according to the cheerfulness of her mood, "a bad cold," "pneumonia," or "my death seizure." Her voice was of an awesome depth, her eyes were moist, and her throat was swathed in a variety of liberty scarfs, unpleasantly suggestive of flannel bandages beneath.

"I'll corral Lucy," murmured the sub, diving viciously through the crowd at a girl

scuttling towards the firewall stairs. The victim offered no resistance, knowing the uselessness of it, but followed the others to the sanctum. First corridor being in its usual state of mine-like twilight, they stumbled over somebody's laundry tied up in a hard bundle and left outside the next door, groped for the knob, and opened the door to be greeted by a blast of cold air and the round face of one of the business editors.

"Esther, if you wish my demise postponed till this number of the *Miscellany* is ready for an eager people, you will close that window." The chief shivered herself into a chair.

"We'll stifle if I do."

"There're only two stages of life in this place," scolded Lucy, as she shut the window, "stifling or freezing. I'd like to know who runs the thermometer here, anyhow."

"Over in Strong," began Esther, "the water in my pitcher—"

"*Please* be still, children," begged the chief. "I've got to read and review this fat *Oliver Wendell Holmes*."

"Anna Adams, do you mean to say you haven't looked at that book till now? It's a regular shame for —"

"Don't say anything ha'sh, Mary, that you'll be sorry for when I have passed away. I know I am a vile worm o' the dust, but I've been to Philadelphia to a wedding this month, and to New York to the opera, and written up a three weeks overdue special topic. I'd like to know how I could do anything more. I've written a choice editorial, too, on the Armenian massacres, with a new and satisfactory solution of the situation thrown in." The last words were rather vague as the speaker sank into the *Life and Letters of Dr. Holmes*.

The door opened to admit the business manager, who began rummaging in drawers, and turning over account books.

"There's a dragon in this office just battens on postage stamps. I bought a whole grist of them only yesterday and not one's left."

The editors wrote away vigorously, their faces fairly vacuous with innocence.

"I'm sorry I'm not a literary light, ladies, so I could help you," she said as she gathered her papers in a neat pile. "Try to have the magazine small this month, won't you? Every page costs us just so much more, you know."

"But, Ellen, we've got to give the subscribers the worth of their money. We mustn't make our profits dishonestly," objected Mary.

"Maybe not," said Ellen, as if really much might be said on the other side. "Give them quality then. One but a lion effect. Good-night."

"Lucky Ellen," sighed Mary. "Here, Esther, finish up this 'Point of View.' The writer left it dangling in mid-air. Wind it up somehow."

Esther, half-way to the door, stopped in dismay.

"I'm just awfully sorry, but I can't stay another minute. I've got to dress a Christian doll for the show to-morrow night, and if I get it done in time I want to take the seven train in the morning for New York."

"Esther Ford, do you mean to say you've been that witless you've taken one of those foolish dolls to clothe?" the mild Lucy quavered with scorn.

"Two!" abjectly.

"I wore my family to regular frazzles sending home great wads of them every year to be dressed in about two days. This fall they declined with severity, therefore I took no dolls," said Anna, coming to the surface from out the waves of Dr. Holmes's early youth.

"It doesn't take long," said Esther.

"It doesn't! I infer you have yet to dress one if such be your belief," said Mary. "Just experiment with a pair of two-inch sleeves, or try to get one of their yokes to 'set.' If I have any time left from work and this *Miscellany* business, I don't want to waste it on fiddling dolls' clothes, I want some fun."

"But I promised, Mary." Esther sidled through the door in order to make her exit as inconspicuous as possible.

A toilsome half-hour passed. Anna read

"Dr. Holmes" with the tense expression of one cramming for a final, Mary copied an illegible manuscript in what she fondly believed to be a fair hand o' writ, Lucy painfully evolved titles for "Points of View."

"Where's Jessie?" suddenly asked Mary.

"'At Random,'" murmured Lucy.

"I wish 'At Random' were abolished. It hasn't had a decent thing in it the last ten years."

"I contribute *vers de société* to it every month myself," said Lucy.

"It has!" Anna emerged with a jerk. "Compare it with that kind of a department in any of the college magazines, and you'll find it as good as any and far better than most."

"There! there!" soothed Mary, "we know the *Miscellany* is equalled by few and excelled by none."

"Here's Jessie!" cried Lucy. All accepted the diversion.

The new-comer looked worn and pale. She laid a bundle of papers on the table.

"There's not enough, and it's bad besides," she announced.

"It is," pronounced the three, reading over one another's shoulders. "Is this all?"

"All!" tragically. "And that Freshman who promised to write a farce for the main department is in the infirmary."

"She should have written it there," said a strange voice, belonging to Rose, the "Personal" editor.

"Rosie, tell me your department is all ready," implored Anna.

"It is not," placidly, "a long alum. report has just appeared in the evening mail, and Professor Lane hasn't sent in her news yet."

"Extort it from her."

"I can't. She's giving the lecturer a party, and I am not bidden thereto."

"I shouldn't think she'd give that silly soul a party," mused Lucy.

"Probably she didn't know he was a silly soul when she invited him," replied the logical Rose.

"It's over now, anyhow. Scandalous hour for the Fac. to be out of bed."

"What's That doing?" asked Rose, pointing to the chief.

"Reading the excellent Holmes with one hand and reviewing him with the other. Getting nervous, too. Walk softly around It."

The chief was in a trance and did not hear.

"What have we for this month?"

"There's that article on student life in Germany," began Mary, shuffling over the heaps of papers piled everywhere, "by the special with a name — Von Klondyke —"

"Von Kronkyte —"

"It's good. All typewritten, spelled correctly, and with commas at suitable distances. Then there's the criticism of modern Russian novels by Frances Gaylord, woggly in spots, but we can brace it up a bit; the prize poem, and a really poetical poem on music."

"That's such a short one, it won't fill up at all."

"Then we have that Indian massacre story and —"

"Indian massacre!" the chief looked up dazedly, "where in the world did we get that?"

"She means that attack by robbers in the Black Forest. Go on, Mary."

"Why, girls, there isn't any more! Do you hear, Ann, there's only one story and two poems!"

Anna groped in the air as if seeking her scattered wits. Having secured them, she beat Dr. Holmes on the table after the manner of a gavel.

"Jessie, go beg Mabel Ropes to write a farce for us, she's bright at that kind of thing. Tell her we'll write the whole *Vassarion* if she'll only help us out this once. Bring her along. When she sees our agonies, she'll work gladly."

"I doubt it," murmured Mary.

"And rout out Sally to write 'At Random' jingles like 'Moderna from Heaven was turned away,' and 'R is for rowdy young rabbit.' She can make them by the yard."

"Her room was all dark when I passed it, and there was 'Positively engaged' on the door," objected Jessie.

"Never mind if it has 'Positively dead' on it, she's got to come. And Neil will help, too. She never goes to bed, and she can review a book without even knowing its name. And, Jessie, as you go along sort of lurk in the dark places, so if any one passes who looks reasonably intelligent and at the same time guileless, you can lasso her. Rose, you know that poetical Special with the strange gowns. See if she hasn't an ode on something lying around. Now, please don't talk. I must get Dr. Holmes buried, and he's still in the prime of life."

The press gang returned soon, dragging Mabel, cross and sleepy, Neil in evening gown, and with the air of taking in the "*Miscellany*" between two dances, and Emily Mackaye, who had been discovered cutting over a fortnightly theme and who had been induced to turn it into a "Point of View." Sally followed, in a wrapper of surpassing grandeur and pinkness.

"Lawk! Sally, where did you get those clothes? I didn't know anybody had such except in a trousseau," said Mabel, whose own costume consisted of a golf skirt and an out-at-elbows dressing-sack.

"It's me room-mate's. She's away for a week, I'm taking a few turns out of her gowns to keep the moths away," returned Sally sweetly. "Children, if I'm to write poems, I've got to have something to sit upon. 'Have we no cheers?'"

"Pile up those old *Vassarions*," advised Lucy. "I thought we had enough chairs, I brought in two from next door this morning."

"They were good to lend them. We haven't one to spare in our room," said Rose.

"Oh, they weren't home."

"*Will* you be quiet?" from the chief.

An hour went by without interruptions save an occasional "How do you spell necessary?" "Do you think 'Forecasts' a good name for my editorial?" "Is basket-ball two separate words or a hyphenated one?" The staff proper sat at the table, the chief writing like a machine, Mary making heavy

bars with the traditional blue pencil in the story she was editing, Lucy and Jessie, with heads close together, pounding out a poem by main strength, counting the words to get the metre, and clinging to the book of synonyms. The little helpers were seated around the wall, using pads and old *Miscellanies* for desks. Every one wore a die-in-the-ranks-but-finish-the-magazine expression. Mary's watch said 2.30 A.M. Now and then some one would rise with a tired sigh and walk about the long, narrow room or go out to the water-tank for a drink. A vast insomnia seemed to brood over the first corridor, Main. Girls wandered up and down its length, whispering or talking outright, calling to one another in only slightly lowered voices, and stopping to visit at various doors.

"I have noticed a tendency," remarked Neil as an especially lively party passed, "on the part of those dwelling on the first corridor to hold the ten o'clock retiring bell in somewhat lax regard."

"It's always so down here," said Rose. "Most of the people are unfortunate Fresh-

men poked off in these rooms. I lived here Freshman year. We sported about the corridors all night."

"Florence Kidder says she never cut in her life nor got up early to study, and she'll have an honor, too," said Mary.

"She's a freak."

"She's mighty nice, though."

"She is that. She saved my life," this from Anna. Then by way of explanation, "she tutored me for a re. in Trig."

"Food!" suddenly exclaimed Sally.

"Where? where?" in excited chorus.

"I must have it."

"Go to Inez or Mary C. They live in a wilderness of pleasant little pabs," advised Anna.

"Now, see here, fellows, I call it terrible plain actions to wake a girl up at three o'clock to ask for food." Mary spoke with heat.

"There are those who esteem it a privilege to be allowed to minister to their suffering little friends," said Neil.

"I can't see that it's any worse to haul a girl out of bed to get something to eat than

it is to make one sit up all night slaving over your old magazine," said Mabel.

"Inez is a real nice-dispositioned person. I woke her up at five the other morning to borrow a collar to wear to New York, and she was full of kind words." The chief was drawn into the discussion.

"I hope you returned the collars," said Mary. "I'd like those of mine you took."

"You can have them back in welcome, they don't fit."

"They fit me."

The atmosphere was distinctly grim. Some one knocked. A very curly head was thrust in.

"Don't let me scare away the afflatus. Molly and I are on cutting. I brought you some of our food."

"Allah be praised!"

"Betty, you're worthy to room with me, and I'm proud you do."

"Dear Betty."

"Betsy, I bequeath you 'Dr. Holmes' in my will, he's a very interesting gentleman."

The tin coffee-pot and the plate of sand-

wiches were seized joyously. The coffee was of a truly fatal color, the sandwiches were made of college bread and butter, three inches to the slice, but they vanished with speed.

"Subject for 'Point of View,' 'Should college bread and butter be used to make sandwiches for a *Miscellany* cut?'"

"I have eaten and drunk, I would sleep now," said Sally. "I've written all the sonnets, lyrics, and other verse forms I'm capable of for the next five years. Please, Miss Nannie, may I go to bed?"

"Good-night, you good little bun," said Anna, squeezing her hard.

"Come on, Bet, glad to get your plate back, aren't you?"

Work went on more cheerfully now.

"Listen, would a man if he were—" began Mary.

"In love, tell a girl so in that casual way? No, he would not. Don't have a love story, they're so simple in the college magazine," said Anna.

"—attacked by robbers in a lonely inn,"

went on Mary, "turn sick with terror and creep into a corner? It's unnatural cowardice."

"That's just what he did do, though. The girl who wrote it told me so. It was her father," said Rose.

"Well, it's very unheroic. I'll get her to change it."

"Change it yourself."

"I can't. She'll be furious."

"As long as I edit this magazine, things are going to be changed if I want them to be!" cried Anna, roused to defend her favorite theory.

"Well, I don't think that's fair. I—"

"Oh, Mary, have him rush upon his enemies with a tomahawk. Anything for a quiet life," said Rose.

"Why don't the girls write brisk, up-and-coming college tales instead of cowboy stories when they haven't been west of Utica in their whole lives, or extraordinary love effects?" asked Mary.

"Because, my friend, the college story is the hardest in the world to write. If you

explain customs and general surroundings enough to enlighten the world without, the grads. are bored. If you don't explain, the public are bored," said Rose, who knew.

"Yes, and if you write about the work people say 'how women grind in their narrow conception of an education.' And if you write about the fun they say 'only silly boarding-school girls after all, with no earnestness or cultivation.' Thank you, I'd rather write two purpose novels and a tract on higher mathematics than one college story," said Anna, who also knew.

"Lucy," said Jessie, "I'm awfully sorry, but your editorial won't fit. It's too long. What shall I cut out?"

"I don't know. I spent just solid hours acquiring chunks of information on public libraries. Every fact is important."

"Maybe I can leave out some of your deductions."

"You shall not. They are the pride of my life. Cut out the facts, but spare my deductions, Hubert."

"The *alumnæ* letter won't fit, either. I daren't leave out any of their facts."

"Read it over carefully, omitting all the *the's*, *and's*, *but's*, and *very's*. You'll find it makes a great difference," advised Rose.

"Will you ladies please read this gent's name? He's given a set of books to the library." Lucy passed along a paper scrawled with strange marks.

"Can't," said Rose, "leave it over till next time. We mustn't make any more such mistakes as we did when we called poor Miss Todhunter Toadhunter."

"Or that Winsky woman business that was published in every month and always wrong."

"Dr. Holmes" — in a feeble voice — "is dead and decently interred. How can I help?"

"Just read this poem the Special sent in. What does it mean?"

Anna studied it carefully.

"It means nothing," she announced. "It's one of those 'puce-colored' things people love because they can't possibly

make sense of them, so they think they are very deep. Put it in."

"Do you think my editorial on self-government, past and present, will offend the alums.?"

"Child, no alum. ever reads anything but the 'Personals' and the college news. No one but the Fac. ever reads the editorials. They won't be pleased, whatever you say, so have some fun freeing your mind. Probably one of the professors will make it a subject of discussion in class, and say it represents the college as a broken-down institution to which no parent would ever send his daughter. And Prexy will give a chapel talk on it with an appendix in the lecture-room. You'll feel like a hero and a martyr and a fool all in one. So go ahead."

"Girls," said Mary with a mighty stretch, "it's nearly five o'clock. Do let's go to bed and finish up in the morning. It won't take ten minutes then. Dr. Holmes, if you wish me to protect you to your room, you've got to get out of your present 'catamouse' state and come along."

“ Mary,” said Anna, as they groped their way out into the corridor, “ could any ‘ fellow-student ’ bring aught against the deliberation and care with which we edit this magazine? ”

HER POSITION

Her Position

THE end double on fourth, Main, bore on its front a small sign, marked "Engaged." This room sported the Vassar oak often. At such times one heard the tinkle of guitars and voices singing "The Road to Mandalay" and "Kentucky Babe," or, if music were absent, the no less attractive cries of "Last call for oysters," "Olives needed at the left, please," which show that a feast is toward. At all hours you could hear bubbling laughter and lively voices. This night, however, the room was perfectly quiet. Only the line of light under the door told that its owners were home. Two dishevelled figures halted outside the door. The corridor, usually clamorous till ten o'clock,—and after,—was curiously silent. Once in a while a monotonous voice sounded from some room, "And Hannibal, sending his elephants in a line ahead," or

a worried one, inquiring, "If line *cd* equals line *ab*, *how* does that affect line *ef*?"

It was the night before the February mid-year exams. Those who had worked conscientiously all the semester and those who had floated butterfly-wise through daily tasks were toiling hideously. For this was a Freshman corridor, and the terror of the first Vassar exam. lay heavy upon all.

"Let's knock up Arna," whispered one of the girls, "she's not studying. She's a regular shark without even trying."

"You can just make up your little mind she's acquiring information in solid chunks as well as the rest of them. All Freshmen cram chock full for exams. They haven't any more wit."

The two Sophomores separated, one to seek a warranted-to-get-any-one-through tutor, and the other to taste the delights of German literature till morning.

Within the double a rather doleful light, produced by a broken Welsbach, showed two girls working as only Freshmen ever do or can, ceaselessly, despairingly. One, in



Vassar Lake

clothes, and with neatly triced up hair, sat bolt upright at a desk, writing slowly. The other, a crumpled heap of pink wrapper and yellow hair, was gabbling excitedly.

"Barbara Sterling, do you mean to say you've reached the second book?"

"Yes, I have. Where are you at?"

"At nothing! I can't remember one of the book props.; and, as for the originals, I never saw their silly faces before."

"What on earth are you doing with all those extraneous geometries? They don't help any."

"I have packed them around me so I'll sort of soak in props. through my skin."

"Barbara!" after two minutes. "Bab! Lady Babbie!"

"Arna, it's really very inconsiderate in you —"

"Yes, yes, I know I've knocked out two or three noble ideas, but I must get your opinion. You know the minds of the 'Olympians' like an X-ray, usually. Shall we have the devil's coffin, and that pyramid effect in the second book, and this thing

that looks like an invoice of bird-cages after a trolley collision? You don't think they'll have the heart to ask for those, do you?"

"Won't they! They dote on them. I've seen every geometry paper for the last five years, and those are on every one."

"But I tell you I can't do them! I never understood what they meant, and I can't learn them by heart, though I've tried for hours."

"You'll flunk then." Barbara's tone was more sympathetic than her words.

"I don't care. Yes, I do, awfully! I think the attitude of the girls here towards flunking is perfectly ridiculous. They act as if you had robbed a bank and eloped with your coachman, and they make you feel so, too. The teachers are just as bad, they have a 'poor thing, she has sinned, but she has repented,' air that makes me wild. Why don't they look at it as the usual thing, and the getting through as the surprise? That's the way men feel. My brother flunks right and left, and he thinks it's grand."

"I don't. It isn't a disgrace, of course

I don't think that. But I'd be ashamed if I were so stupid or so careless I couldn't pass ordinary undergraduate work."

"Well, I wouldn't. It's the way the girls take it makes me dread it so. They'll be so surprised that Arna Kellar, who spouted so in class, didn't know enough to escape flunking. They'll look just the way those Seniors did when Mabel Hall's name had a star against it in the catalogue, as if she'd been a cheat all through college, and had imposed on them with a kind of brilliancy, when really she didn't know enough to go in out of the wet."

"The girls needn't ever know it, honey."

"They will, just the same. It always leaks out. I'm not going through any secret society performances, either. I'm going to stand out in the corridor, the way May Wilks did, and just shout, 'Say, everybody, I've flunked my geometry.' It's enough to make the girls cheat to be on such a strain."

"But it doesn't. Your theory hasn't any facts behind it. You know there isn't a fraud in Vassar once in three years. I'm

proud of it for that." Barbara pushed her chair back excitedly.

"I wish they did."

"Arna Kellar, you — I know you don't mean that. Don't you think it's the finest thing here, that no one watches us? We're alone in the room half the time, we keep our books in our laps, and we're squeezed into one another's pockets, yet not a girl cheats."

"Why, do you suppose? Are we honester than men?"

"No. Yes. We must be. Somehow it doesn't seem so bad in men, because it's the expected thing. The Fac. know it and watch out for it. It's a kind of a game the men play with the professors."

"I bet I could play it to win!" laughed Arna.

"But you can't here. It would be so cowardly, so mean, when you can do it as easy as breathing. Besides, when you come right down to it, it's lying. You may call it a game or a trick or anything you please; but it's just plain, ordinary lies."

"I know it," agreed Arna. "It must be sort of fun, though. I won't interrupt again, for true," as Barbara screwed nervously in her seat.

Both girls studied silently while the clock on the desk ran races with itself. Barbara Sterling was just a girl like a hundred others at Vassar, and a thousand outside. But Arna was one in a century. It was not her beauty and her brilliancy that made her remarkable, though she possessed both, it was that she was the embodied spirit of youth itself; the vivid, joyous, tireless youth which poets and painters love. With her the year was always at the spring, the morning at seven. She seemed the daughter of an earlier race who lived before the world was ever sick or sorry. The girls called her "unmoral," "Greek," and asked to see the furry ears hidden beneath her hair. Yet they followed her as one follows a cool wind on a languid summer day. She ruled the class by the divine right of personal magnetism.

She was chairman of the first class meeting, where the stream of young women

brought up on Roberts's "Rules of Order," who talk awesomely of "privilege motions" and "previous business," meets the stream of young women who wouldn't know a motion if they saw it and talk five at once. She soothed and patted and scolded and coaxed this chaotic mass into decency and order, and escaped unharmed, For which the class made her president, by unanimous vote. At the end of two months she belonged to all the worth-while societies and many that were not, had acted in the first hall play, knew half the college to speak to, and had a king's guard of devoted friends. She played gayly from week's end to week's end, and thought Vassar the maiden's paradise.

But uneasy lies the head that wears a crown at exam. time. Half of Arna's power, and she knew it, lay in her brilliant scholarship. At Vassar there is a cold shoulder for both Miss Grind and Mademoiselle Fripon. She who can stand high in her class and yet keep in with most of the fun can "have" the other girls. Arna had done it because of a nimble wit that flew the faster

in dangerous situations, and a luck which was fairly ominous. She knew, however, that neither wit nor luck availeth anything against a blank sheet of paper, and a professor wearied beyond even humanity by the same mistakes in a hundred different answers.

Both girls lagged down to breakfast half an hour late. Barbara looked gray and pinched, but Arna was as fresh as if newly created. The cross, nervous Freshmen at the table held up their heads with a flicker of animation as Arna swept in.

"I'm going skating before exams.," she announced. "My head feels cracky in spots. I want air."

"I'm going to do the most foolish act, study up to the last moment," answered Barbara, rising from an uneaten breakfast.

When Barbara entered Phil. Hall, she found that the examination was ready to begin. She dropped into the last row of seats, noticing, as she did so, that Arna was the only other person in it. Her roommate wore a half-defiant, half-gay smile.

"She'll get through!" thought Barbara, then, as she read the questions, "She can't. They've asked for the bird-cages, and the pyramid, and all those she didn't learn."

An hour later Barbara dragged herself out of the mathematical abyss into which she had sunk to borrow some paper. She turned towards Arna, who with her back half-around was writing steadily. Barbara leaned over. She stared a full minute in frightened surprise. Then she slipped back in her place. She had seen Arna cheating! There was no mistaking the carefully drawn and labelled figures on the small squares of paper. She was doing it coolly, too, as if it had all been planned long before. Barbara stared helplessly at her own paper. The inexorable questions seized hold of her again. She forgot that she had a room-mate, even.

At luncheon a withered-looking set of girls listened in impotent rage while the mathematical genius of the class explained all the mistakes in their answers, and how easily they might have avoided them. Arna

laughed and chaffed the genius. She wasn't even tired. Barbara worried all the afternoon over what she had seen in the morning. Ought she to talk to Arna about it or not? She finally decided that she ought to, but that she could not.

The last examination of the week was Latin. Barbara thought of that and shivered. Arna was weak in Latin prose. Fate put them side by side. Fate made her look up just in time to see what she wanted above everything not to see. Was it deliberate on Arna's part, this cheating, or was it because she was always so self-possessed that she showed neither flurry nor shame now? Some one else had seen her. The Freshman on Arna's left looked over at Barbara, her eyes said, "We know, don't we? but we'll never tell." She was a foolish little thing, who worshipped Arna. She would keep the secret safely enough, but she would say to herself, "Arna Kellar cheats and Barbara Sterling keeps quiet about it. I can cheat, too, if I please." Barbara had a good deal of weight in the class.

Barbara broke away from a crowd of girls who circled about her in the corridor after chapel. They were going to celebrate with a grand feast what might be the last night of happiness for many. To-morrow the flunk notes would appear. She pinned "Asleep" on her door,—no one would heed their "Engaged" now the time of storm and stress was over. She sat down in the arm-chair and looked at Arna, resting on the couch with the new *Jungle Book* and a box of Huyler's.

"You cheated in exams. I saw you." The words said themselves, violently.

"I didn't!" Arna was on her feet.

"Don't you dare deny it! I saw you, twice, in geometry and in Latin."

Arna stood perfectly quiet. She hardly seemed to understand the words. Suddenly she flung herself on the couch, sobbing fiercely and beating the pillows with her hands. Barbara was not prepared for this. She had expected denial, excuse. She had never seen Arna even depressed. Now she was listening to what might have been the

cries of an animal in pain. It was terrible. She ran to the couch and knelt by it.

"Don't, Arna, don't! You didn't mean to. You were tempted. You—" The memory of Arna's face in the examination made her catch her breath.

"Who knows it?"

"Only I and—I think—Lily Thomas. I haven't told a soul."

"And she never will!"

"You'll tell yourself. You'll go to the Fac. and confess."

"You simpleton!" Arna laughed aloud. Her laugh was more shocking even than her tears.

She pulled Barbara on to the couch, kneeling in her place. She clasped her waist with her arms and kissed her. Her eyes were wild still, but her voice was caressing. She begged and reasoned that Barbara would not tell, that she would not even ask her to confess herself, that the past might be the past, and a fresh start taken.

"Promise, Lady Babbie, promise. Don't ruin my life in college! Don't make me a

despised, shunned thing. Promise! promise!"

And Barbara promised. Not till she lay wakeful in bed did she realize that Arna had not said one word of real remorse. All her grief had been lest the girls should know and she be "ruined."

The subject was never mentioned again. Sometimes in the spring semester, when Barbara saw Arna golfing, boating, or idling about the campus all day without a thought of study and only an occasional one of classes, she longed to say, "Remember." But Barbara hated nagging.

The first day of the Finals had come. The heat was sickening. Girls who had managed to squeeze through Chauvenet's Geometry dared not hope for such luck in Hall and Knight's Algebra. Every one was morose. People were late at the Hall. Seats gave out. There was great confusion and shuffling about. Barbara sat down disgustedly in a seat, determined to stay there, no matter who else was ousted. She jumped up quickly. Arna was beside her, and that

other Freshman! With an effort she sat down again.

The examination over, Barbara took a long walk by herself. She had forgotten to worry over whether she had passed or not. She had seen Arna cheat again. The Freshman had seen her, too.

Some one haled Barbara away to her room to see an old grad. The old grad. proved to be a young and pretty woman, who was relating to a roomful of girls, too far from graduation to be vitally interested, her experiences as a school-teacher. She caught her breath long enough to greet the newcomers, then went on with her tale. It was of the vast amount of cheating in the prep. schools. The old grad. grew very earnest over it. She begged the Vassar girls to keep up the old-time standard of absolute honor in all ways, not only for the good to the college itself, but for the influence it might have on the schools. Her enthusiasm and her scorn of the evil wrought on her hearers, always strong in defence of honest work. Barbara listened, painfully. Her

own mind had been grinding that subject over and over all day.

"What would you do if you saw a girl cheat twice, and told her, and then you saw her do it again?" she burst out.

"Expose her, and help send her to Coventry," cried the old grad.

"I think she ought to be made a warning. It might do her good, and it surely would the college," said Sarah Ralph, a severe-looking girl.

Barbara told her story in detail, omitting the names.

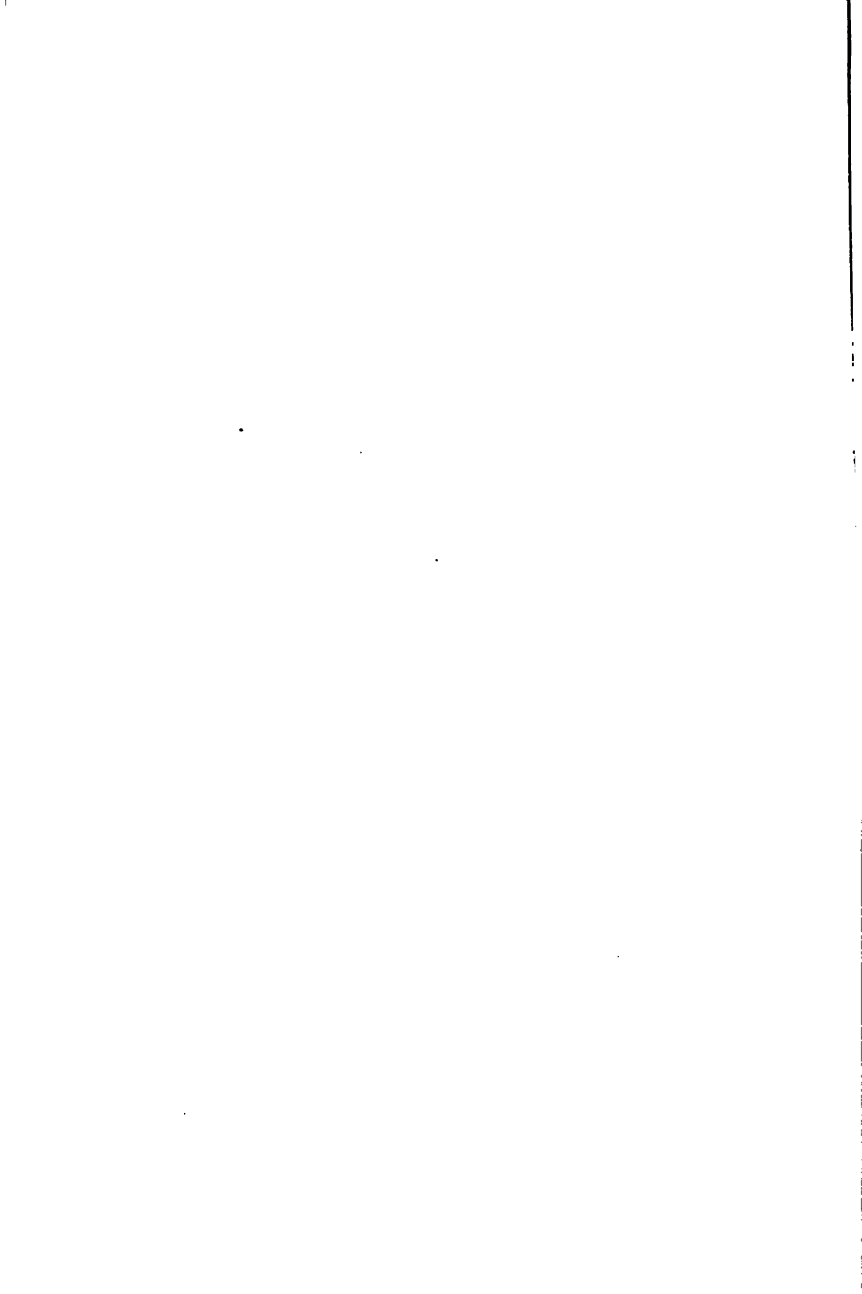
"You say another girl saw it, and knows you did, too?" asked the grad. "I think it is your duty to the college to tell. That other girl may cheat and by her example influence a third, and she a fourth, and so on, endlessly." The old grad. made a dramatic little gesture.

"It's right abstractly ; but, oh, how hard for the girl !" said Lois Duncan.

"Tell, Barbara !" "We'll cut her dead." "Tell! you must for the college," came from all sides. Barbara hesitated, fright-



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ened, unhappy. Outside in the corridor she heard Arna's voice, careless, gay. "Can't stop, my dear, I've loafed the entire semester. I'm a gloomy grind for all this week."

"Arna," said Barbara as the two were going to bed.

"Mm?" said Arna, her mouth full of tooth-brush.

Barbara clasped her hands tightly together. An indignant and shocked group of girls had passed sentence on Arna and deputized her to deliver it, but Barbara had loved Arna.

"I've told the girls about the two times you cheated last exams., and to-day," she rushed the words out anyway.

"You did! What did they say?"

"You're — they — it's for the sake of college —" she could not finish. Arna laughed defiantly, insolently almost.

"I'm not afraid of the girls," was all she said.

Barbara had braced herself for a scene like the former one. Arna began to whistle.

She kept it up till the lights were out. Soon after, Barbara, quivering and crying silently, heard her breathing in sleep.

It was hard to believe that beautiful, witty, fascinating Queen Arna could be deposed, harder still that she could be ignored. Yet no one in her class spoke to her, not even Barbara. The minute the last exam. was over Arna left the college.

The first night of the fall semester every one is glad to be back. It's a wrench, to be sure, to give up home and the enthralling do-nothingness of vacation ; but, oh ! it's so good to see Lois and Sarah and Molly and Betty again. One's family is lovely, of course, and quantities of agreeable folk float about in summer ; but the girls are the girls ; no one just fills their place. Barbara ran from room to room, where she was welcomed with shouts and rejoicings. Scraps of news were called out to her as she flitted from one place to another.

"I've got my single at last —"

"The new English teacher was at our hotel this summer. She —"

"All the rooms have Welsbachs. We can't make fudges any —"

"Barbara," this time in a whisper, "Arna Kellar is back."

"She is! How will she act? How will the girls act to her?"

Both questions were answered within the week. No one in the class spoke to her. She never seemed to know she was being cut. She went through the corridors, entered chapel and the dining-room, walked, golfed, wheeled, did everything, with all the old strong, sweet gayety. She seemed as happy shut up to herself as in the days when half college thronged around her. She did not repulse the overtures by members of the other classes, who only half-understood the matter, yet she made them feel she would rather not receive them. This was no bravado of a week, but the steady life of all winter. She was perfectly alone, she was perfectly happy.

"She has no heart," thought Barbara bitterly, "she is just a beautiful body without conscience or feeling."

Arna returned her Junior year and again her Senior. By this time college had become accustomed to her position. She made no new friends, and such of the old as wished to receive her back into favor she treated with smiling indifference. She did not appear to shun the girls, nevertheless she was never there when they tried to talk to her. At first Barbara had missed Arna sorely. She was one of the people who like fun but cannot make it. Arna's unfailing joy had kept her in a sort of delighted surprise. Barbara did not care for many people, she never expected to love another girl as she had once loved Arna. Her own share in Arna's disgrace vexed her mind constantly. Was she a self-righteous prig? a disloyal tell-tale? or was she a youthful Brutus doing justice on even her own blood? She could never decide. Life at college is too intense, too eager, to let one brood long over anything. Arna and the whole unhappiness connected with her were swept into the back of Barbara's memory.

Senior year had come, and with it the

presidentships of clubs, the chairmanships of committees, and, most onerous burden of all, the responsibility for that mystery known as "the tone" of college. Some Seniors are so impressed by this that they never get back to a normal state. Their whole after life is spent in alternately moralizing over and trying to alter "the tone" of the place they happen to inhabit. Other Seniors, the more light-minded, refuse to be as gods while in college. These same, however, gasp with consternation when they find how little the big world cares about them, or their college, or their beautiful degree. They begin to wish they had lorded it more regally while yet their little day endured.

No one appears to study much of anything Senior year, unless it be some special topic devotee or some unlucky wight captured for an ethics debate, but every one is fiercely busy. The underclassman who rooms with a Senior may count on the parlor being occupied three nights in the week by a clamorous committee, and the other four by heated discussions on the great questions of

the day: Will you, if you get an honor, refuse it? Will the Fac. be fair in disqualifying Emily Brown for an honor because of poor Freshman work? Are honors just? Is there peace and harmony between the Fac. and the students? If there isn't, why not? and many others. The discussions are one of the pleasantest parts of Senior year. They lead nowhere, as nobody ever converts anybody else, and the Faculty wouldn't pay any attention even if the whole college was of one mind; but the zest of argument is just as joyous as if mighty results were brought to pass.

Barbara's Senior year was a bitterly hard one. She was a slow girl, who could just keep up with the required work under the most favorable conditions. She was not well her Junior year, and so fell behind. The fall of her Senior year she had a long fever. If any of you have ever had a block of time cut out of your college life by illness, you know the wearisome drag, drag, of topics that never get finished, essays that never get written, lessons that never catch up. All the labor-saving devices, from a good tutor to

"a judicious slur," are powerless to pull the ordinary student up into line. Barbara plodded drearily along, tired, discouraged, unhappy. She had too much pluck and too little wisdom to go home and be graduated in the next class.

One hot May afternoon, when drowsy sounds stole in through the open windows, and a faint haze dimmed the keenness of the spring green, she rose from the last lecture of the day nervous and exhausted. She stopped to speak to the professor about some of the never completed back work.

"Miss Sterling," said the professor hesitatingly, "your work is not quite up to the standard. You have probably been especially interested in some other subject and so have neglected this."

Barbara smiled grimly. "Am I going to flunk?"

"Oh, I think not, a thorough review, good papers in the written lessons and at examination time, will put you all right."

Barbara walked wearily downstairs, the elevator being in its usual damaged condition.

She stood still a minute by the open door of the Faculty parlor, and looked into the mirror which once reflected the turns and twirls of countless girls in the old days when the room was J. She saw herself sallow-faced, hollow-eyed, thin, and drooping. Even her clothes seemed to share the general depression, they looked flaccid and draggled.

"If I flunk and have to study for a re. Senior vacation, I shall die dead." She swallowed two fat tears that ran into her mouth. "I can just manage to crawl on till then, but I can't do another stroke."

Some one passed her with flying feet. It was Arna Kellar, dressed for dinner in a gown that seemed all fresh, fluffy frills and rose ribbon. Her hair shone like gold, her cheeks were vivid pink, her whole air was radiant. Barbara felt a great longing to be near her, to have her strength revive her, as in the old days.

"Arna!" she called. They had not spoken for three years.

"Yes?" Arna was as cool as if she had parted from Barbara only an hour ago.

"Isn't it a pretty day?"

"Too hot, don't you think?" and she was gone.

Barbara wandered lifelessly out to the Oval. She could not watch the basket-ball practice going on there. It hurt her to see every one so alive and jolly. She thought she should like to find Georgia Oberley, who of course was grinding nervously along somewhere, and work and worry and be miserable with her. Georgia's anxious, hurried face was the only one she wanted to see now.

An agitated rustle stirred the lecture-room the next morning. A drop quiz, and from a clear sky! Barbara propped her head on her hand and stared at the Greek quotation written on the board. She knew it perfectly, if she could only get started on it. Her mind, past all power of original thinking, would work of itself, she knew, if it were only set a-going. If some one would only give her the first line, the first sentence even! She remembered reading Jane Barlow's story, "Mr. Polymathers," in which an old man

after half a century of writing gets his chance at Dublin College. He goes up, is confronted with "a bit of Virgil I'd known all me days," and cannot read one word of it. She understood that story now. The whole quiz was on that quotation, its "philosophy," "philology," "subjectivity," and several other things the old Greek who wrote it never imagined were in it. And this was the subject in which she had been warned!

Who was that hateful party opposite her at the table, writing like the wind? Arna! No fear of her cheating now, she was the most thorough-going student in the class. If she could only be a mind-reader for one instant! Arna had laid her papers out on the table; her handwriting might have served on a sign-board. Suppose she, Barbara Sterling, were to read the first line, only the first one! Suppose she were to be a cheat and a liar!

She read the first page. Then, just as she expected, her mind began to grind in the old track. She copied Arna's pages as

mechanically as a machine, correcting her mistakes, profiting by her better choice of words. The bell sounded, the hour had gone in her struggle to get started. She folded her paper together with a wornout sigh. Not till then did she look up. Arna was watching her with an odd expression, impossible to read. Had she seen?

Barbara walked to her room and went to sleep. Her last thought was, "You are a liar." She did not care especially.

She slept till the spring twilight crept in and hid the sunbeams. The long rest broke her unnatural calm. She lashed herself for her fault as only a sensitive, overconscientious girl can. She called it her "unpardonable sin." Hot and tousely from sleep, she hurried to the professor's room. No, her written lesson had not passed her; but, in reviewing her work for the semester, it seemed better than the professor had at first thought, so she was as yet unconditioned. The lesson had not counted greatly either way. She was very busy, would Miss Sterling call again? No chance for confession to-night.

Every one was out on the campus. People with work that must be done before first hour soothed their consciences by telling them that from 5 to 7 A.M. was the prince of times for studying. Of course, no one would really get up at that hour. It is only when you are a Freshman that you grope along the corridors in the dreary "false dawn" to some room where queer soups, made out of canned mysteries, and queerer mental food, await you. People without work — or consciences — were riotously joyful. They played games among the trees, where the shadows were scarey, and out in the open, where the moon shone. Silly games they were, like tag and blind man's buff. The players wanted to be silly. They were so happy, just to be young and at Vassar in the spring. Groups of twos and threes were wandering about or curled up in corners of the buildings. Half the Senior class were singing on Strong steps. Their voices sounded sweet. Somebody in Raymond was calling to some one in Strong, with intent to be heard, too.

Even that sounded pleasant and friendly and a good part of college, softened as all was by the May night.

Barbara sat down on the steps of one of those doors where no one ever comes out, in the angle of the wings. She wanted the night, but she didn't want the girls. Some did come out that time. The girl almost fell over Barbara.

"Arna!" she cried. Then in almost the words of three years ago, "I cheated to-day."

"I saw you."

"Don't you despise me?"

"I? I have such a right to!" Arna laughed lightly, but bitterly.

"Sit down, Barbara," she pushed her back on the seat, "and listen to me. You are sick from your work and your—well, yourself. You went into class as honest—as—as—that sky." A clear blue space stretched above their heads. "You knew that test absolutely. I haven't been in your class for nothing. A month from now you'll be able to read that off like a shot.

You're worn out now and weak-willed and beside yourself. Before you thought—why, you couldn't think, you hadn't any mind left—you copied from me. It was cheating, one way, but it wasn't in another. You've slaved four years, and you were so honest you wouldn't let any one give you ordinary help even. I know one dishonest act doesn't make a girl a liar, it's doing it again and again that"— She stopped. Both girls looked up at the sky. They could not face one another yet.

"Bab," the old name brought tears to the other's eyes. "I was a cheat. Oh, not when you saw me, I don't mean, that was the least of my lies. I never studied. I didn't know anything that Freshman year. I wasn't out and out and square about it like Betty Blake and Sally Dean. I didn't say, 'I don't care about your old books. I came for fun.' I wanted to be considered a great scholar and a genius. I couldn't bear to have the girls think me just like every one else who had to grind over Hygiene and Freshman English, or flunk.

I planned to cheat all the semester. When the time came, I did it as coolly as you eat your breakfasts. I told myself, 'You're a cheat,' but I didn't mind it any more than I minded saying, 'You're young.' I never had thought of right or wrong, honor or dishonor, just of fun, nothing else, and I suppose I wasn't born with 'an intuitive moral sense.'

"Do you remember how I cried when you found out? I felt awfully to have you know, for I wanted your good opinion, but I didn't care a rye straw for my own disgrace. After a bit, when I found you weren't going to tell, I didn't mind you, you were as nice as ever to me."

Arna was silent a minute. When she spoke again, it was in a low voice that Barbara had never heard from her before.

"When you told, I was wild against you, but I never dreamed the girls would cut me. I was such a fool in those days. I didn't believe love of truth and a high standard of honor could win against me. I thought I held the girls so fast they couldn't get away.

I didn't think there were so many high-minded girls here. I measured every one by myself. I had no real character, just charm and a happy nature.

"Look at me, Bab. Am I the same?"

She bent over Barbara till her face almost touched hers. Even in the shadowy light Barbara could see the change wrought by the three years, the girl made into a woman. "When I saw they were in earnest, I ran away, home. I never meant to come back. I remembered my family, they would learn it somehow. I determined to come back and brave it out. I would act just as happy as ever. Haven't I done it? You thought I was wooden, didn't you? You wouldn't believe I could have such pride, such self-control. I can do anything I try. That sounds young. It's true, just the same. Did you ever live three days all alone, with no one to even look at you, not away off like a hunter in the woods, but with people who despised you all around? Somebody says a great crowd is a great wilderness. I lived in the wilderness three years,



Davison

and — and — God only knows how lonely I have been !

“At first I hated the girls. After a while I began to think. Oh, you can do a mighty lot of thinking in three years ! I grew to hate myself. In those Freshman days I was the most hideous creature on earth, one who hadn't a thought for any one but herself, and that the lowerside, too,—her fun, her position, her importance, her pleasure. I cared for those so much I dragged myself through the mud to save them. What difference was there between me and a man who follows his passion ? I didn't happen to want to drink or gamble. If I had, I would. You think I'm morbid. Do I look like that ? My cheating was just one way my awful selfishness expressed itself. What did I care about honor, or Vassar's standards, or anything, as long as my reputation for brightness was safe, my power over the girls unshaken ? I was one of those 'feeble souls' Emerson describes, who wants to be loved, but don't care about being lovely. I wanted praise, and influence, and friendship

that I hadn't earned, that just came to me because I had certain ways of speaking and looking, not because I was really fine.

"But now — I — want to be lovely. I reckon I'm what my old mammy used to call 'converted to 'ligion.' Some of the girls think my punishment was too great. Maybe it was for those three acts, not for my life."

"You needn't bring any punishment on me," said Barbara sternly. "I'll be my own hangman. I'm going to tell every one myself."

Arna started as if roused out of sleep.

"What did you say? Oh — yes. I'll never tell. You mustn't, either. Your punishment is not to tell. If you do, you'll take away the sting of your fault. People will think you have expiated it; and you'll think so, too, and you'll feel soothed, and — and — you must keep it a secret always."

"I can't! I hate myself for it."

"That's morbid. One fault doesn't break us any more than one virtue makes us. A

fault ought never to be confessed, unless it's going to do some good. Otherwise it's only a weak effort to hush up our conscience. Don't you see how much greater punishment it is for you to keep still?"

"But my influence, my rank!"

"Who saw, except me? You'll pass without that paper. Promise me you won't tell. Promise! Think about your family. Promise!"

Barbara, never able to refuse Arna, nodded. She held Arna's hand hard.

"Arna," timidly, "you said you hated the girls. I ruined your life here, but I meant to do right. Did you hate me?"

"Once. After that my pride wouldn't let me look at you again. When you spoke to me to-day, I couldn't stop to talk, the first time after three years. But now— Oh, Bab, I'm a 'feeble soul' still. I'm not lovely, but I want to be loved— by you."

"Won't you answer one question for me?" said Barbara, raising her head from Arna's lap, where it had been resting since they finished talking. "Did I do right to tell

the girls? You would have grown thoughtful and sincere yourself, I know, without such 'a refiner's fire.' You were so young then."

The bell sounded within the building. Arna stood up. Her face was hidden in the shadow.

"We are friends again, that's all that really matters now," she said.

A SENSE OF OBLIGATION



A Sense of Obligation

LUCRETIA FOLGER was brought up in one of those stranded New England villages, "left by the stream whose waves are years," which, robbed of its patriarchs by death, its young men by the city, grow ever feebler and weaker. Without enterprise, ambition, or interest in itself even, the village was like some once fresh stream become now, its outlet dammed, a stagnant pond. An artist may think the pond peaceful and picturesque, a scientist knows it is deadly.

Lucretia's family — her clan made up half the village — were virtuous, ignorant, and dull. Lucretia, defying the laws of heredity and environment, was sensitive, poetical, "a scorner of the ground," an idealist. The villagers called her "a kind of genius," with a cold contempt in the word "genius." Her family scolded, jeered, and reasoned till she despised her ideals as "fools' notions" and

her nature as "unbalanced." If she had been the genius the village called her, she probably would have paid it back its contempt threefold and lived her own life. But she was not. She was only a young girl who loved passionately all good and beautiful things. Because she knew no one else in the whole world like herself, she believed she was wrong, and struggled ceaselessly against her own nature. She fought back the shiver of protest that moved her when she saw a new evidence of the village allegiance to its favorite text, "Is not the life *less* than meat?" She longed to be prosaic, practical, sordid, which she termed "not being queer."

When she was twenty, two events changed her life. Her grandfather died, leaving her "considerable property," and Miss Rockwell came.

Miss Rockwell was a graduate of the early Vassar when it was a Female College. Her sense of her responsibility towards "the higher education of women" filled her with a rather awesome zeal. She claimed Lu-



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cretia with the rallying cry, "You need Vassar, and Vassar needs you."

Lucretia offered no resistance. That of her family was conquered by the argument that a college education was an investment of her money which would yield a good interest in the shape of a salary as a teacher.

What can express that which Vassar was to her? Land to the shipwrecked sailor? Water to the desert traveller? These know the bitterness of her deprivation, but not its years of endurance. Vassar gave her books, instruction, inspiration. Its great gift was respect for herself, the assurance that she had a right to her individuality, though it differed from that of every other human being. It showed her no new great vision of truth or beauty. The little farm garden had been to this "dreamer of dreams" an "isle called Patmos." It did prove to her that hers were such indeed, and no will-o'-the-wisps, and that there is no worker so great as he who is "a holder up of visions."

In return Lucretia loved Vassar idolatrously. She thought it perfect, and listened

with real distress to the denunciations of everybody from President to elevator boy, with which the most loyal Vassarites then, as now, were wont to cheer themselves. She rushed into battle with these same revilers, changed to offensive partisans, to repel all outside critics. She absorbed all that Vassar could offer, in work and in fun. She did everything that one mortal, hampered by time and space, could. Her little body was exhausted often, but her spirit never flagged. Some of the professors said her steady, eager gaze in a lecture hypnotized them. She even spent her vacations at Vassar, that she might not miss one experience of College, not even that of the bare, lonesome corridors and deserted campus.

Out of her devotion to College grew a longing to have its influence felt everywhere. Vassar was a true miracle-worker. It must go, like the mountain to Mahomet, to those who, by reason of age or sex, could not come to it. She weighed earnestly the needs of different charities and schools. Where would Vassar do the most good?

Commencement found her still undecided. Then came a letter from her mother. She and Lucretia's step-father had been "roller-stoning it," as their former neighbors said, all over the West for several years. Now they were settled in a small town near the Rockies. The mother was lonely and feeble; Lucretia was her only unmarried child; the town wished a school-teacher; Lucretia's money was used up. The deduction from these facts seemed clear to the mother. So it did to the daughter. At the end of the week she went West.

Lucretia's Western home was the likeness of her Eastern one, with the difference that the one was a stranded farm village, once dwelt in by honest farmers, and the other was a stranded mining-camp, whose first settlers had been lawless miners. The miners had gone; with them the violence and crime of the early days, with them also the spirit and energy of the town. Only poor whites and half-breeds remained, a lazy, shiftless crew, who just kept alive the sick town which could neither die nor get well.

It was, however, a civilized, Christian community, with a church and a school. The world was too busy with missions on the Congo, seminaries in Alaska, and settlements in Boston to give it a thought. If the people had been picturesque, the work dangerous, or the sympathy of fellow-workers present, Lucretia would have found some inspiration. As it was, she saw that Vassar must work alone. She never doubted the result. College was a vast power-house, she was the connecting wire between it and the forsaken town.

The years that followed her graduation were spent by Lucretia in giving out Vassar with the same unflagging energy as she had absorbed it. She was Board of Education, Library Association, Sunday School Committee, Neighborhood Guild, Charity Organization, Hospital, and Orphan Asylum. She wrote her friends, "It is a hard life, but a happy one." She may have been right about the happiness, yet her old quick-coming smile had something mechanical in it now, and her eyes were always full of shadows.

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At first Vassar was only a brake on the steady, if gradual, downhill course of the town. Then the town stood still, and then — oh, how long to the then! — it began to mount up. The improvement was pitifully small. An outsider would have seen no change in the town of that day and of the long ago June when Lucretia came. But Lucretia saw, and thanked God and Vassar College.

About this time she began to save money for her class reunion. She had missed the two years and the five years ones, for she had neither money nor time to spare, but this tenth she must attend. She needed the encouragement of Vassar itself, of the members of the class accomplishing good results in various kinds of work. Most of all she wanted to see the dear girls again, and laugh and talk and forget she was a wire or a messenger or anything but just Lucretia Folger, Vassar, '8—.

The first day of school that year she noticed a big young fellow seated by the door, who looked rough, but gave no trouble.

Once, when his cool gray eyes met her soft brown ones, a flash of sympathy passed between them. Later she found that he was Jean Lloyd from the hill camp, and that he had been at school more than most of the town boys. Lucretia liked him at once. He was both manly and gentle, in spite of his apparent roughness. He was clever, too, when he could be stirred out of his usual laziness.

Jean, for his part, adored his little teacher, as a boy often does a woman twice his age. She was brighter, prettier, and more refined than any one he had ever met in his knocked-about life.

As he was not a fit for any of the dozen classes crowded into the school day, Lucretia gave him special courses before and after the session. To do this, she had to lengthen her day and shorten her night an hour each. "I can sleep any time," she said, "but it's not often I get such a boy to teach." It was uphill work teaching him, for most of the time he did not want to learn. She taxed Vassar to the fullest for incentives. If

she could only win this boy, it would be the seal of Vassar's rule in that far country. So she cheered, scolded, persuaded, reasoned, implored, till the boy caught some of her fire and began to work in a steady, grinding way sure to accomplish results. One afternoon the two were walking in the woods together, as they often did.

"My folks came from New England, too," Jean said suddenly. Conversation was always irregular between them.

"How did you get out here?"

"Father had the mining fever, so he came, mother came because he did, and we kids because we had to. Father died, and mother never had money to get back East. We kept on here after she died because we hadn't any other home. My father was educated. He was a Yale graduate," shyly.

"I knew it," cried Lucretia, "that's where you inherit your good mind."

"Oh, mother was smart, too, though she wasn't educated like he was."

"You're going to college yourself," went on Lucretia excitedly. "It will be wicked if

you stagnate like the men here." She had longed for the chance to talk to him about an education, now it had come.

"Easy talking," answered the boy with his slow smile. "I don't know enough to get in. If I did, where'd the money come from?"

"Work your way through, dozens of girls do it at Vassar, and it's far harder for a girl than for a man. I'll prepare you. You're almost ready now."

"You're real kind, but I don't know as I want to go."

They halted, facing one another. The boy was away above Lucretia's head. She stepped on a rock and from this throne poured out the love and devotion of ten years for her College. She thought she spoke for Yale, but it was really for Vassar. When she ended, he said coolly enough, but with a spark in his eyes,—

"I don't know as I want to go yet; but, if you say I must, I reckon it's settled."

Lucretia worked that year as never before. The boy, thoroughly aroused, drained her

knowledge dry at every lesson. Sometimes she feared he would break down, for he worked in the camp out of school hours. It was she herself who was nearest the worn-out place. The school-house seemed a prison within whose walls she trod a weary treadmill. Every morning she dragged herself out of bed, wavered, whispered, "Good for another day," and crept downstairs.

June was coming! June with College and the girls! The thought quickened her weary feet and brightened her heavy eyes. She slept with her bank-book under her pillow. In it was the record of ten years' saving pinched away from all luxuries and many comforts. It was her guarantee of coming happiness: she liked to feel it in the long, restless nights.

Spring had reached May, cold and damp in that part of the world. Lucretia had given her pupils a holiday in honor of some local god. Jean, however, had come as usual. Her head felt thick and hot. Should she tell him she could not teach to-day? She was conscious, without raising her eyes, that he stood before her speaking.

"I'm awful sorry. You'll be disappointed. I'm not going to college."

"What?"

"I've given up college. It's not the getting in. I guess I know enough for that. It's the money. I haven't enough for my fare East, even. After I get in, I'd have to work like a horse just to keep alive. A man here's offered me a job with good wages and a chance to get more. If I had fifty dollars, even, I'd stick to college, for I've got the notion. But my spunk's all given out. I haven't the grit to go and starve, and that's about what it comes to. There's no use talking to me," — for Lucretia had moved a little, — "my mind's set. You can't change it." The words came in thumps.

Lucretia stared stupidly at him. In a minute he went out. Very slowly all he had said reached her brain. If she could only get money for him! Why she had it herself!

Her head resting in her hands, her arms propped on the table, she struggled with the

problem. Which was the right,—to go to the reunion; to draw in strength, courage, inspiration, to give out again to the feeble, needy town, which had no other helper, or to give this boy a chance to be the man he was meant to be? The need of the town was sore, surely. The boy had a splendid strength within him if it could once be quickened to life.

Her own vacation, the sight of the old loved friends, the visit to her adored College, for which she had saved and yearned ever since the blue line of the Catskills faded from her eyes, never occurred to her at all. There are some people who have eliminated the personal equation from their problems.

She sat still a long time. Perhaps the clergyman in the shabby church across the road would have been shocked to know she was invoking Vassar College as if praying to it.

"I see my duty," she said at length, as firmly as a general giving a command. "The good to the boy is certain and great:

that to the town is uncertain and may be small. It is now or never for him. The town has other chances."

She stood up in the relief of decision. Then all that she was giving up rushed into her thoughts. She sat down on the worn little school platform, exclaiming, "Oh, my beautiful visit! the dear girls!" No tears rose in her eyes, but her face worked with "a kind of dry weeping that comes to the miserable."

With very bright eyes and very white cheeks, Lucretia hurried toward the camp to find Jean. She was not afraid her resolve would give way, it had passed out of her control into an accomplished fact, but she wanted the boy to know the good news at once.

He was sawing wood alone behind the camp.

"You'll have to go to College now," she began without other greeting. "I have the money for you,—your fare and a good deal more."

"Where'd you get it?" bluntly.

"It's my own." Lucretia was too unconscious of herself to be diplomatic. "I saved it to go to my class reunion at Vassar. I decided, after you left, that it would be far more wisely used in helping you through college than it —"

The boy was not listening. He had picked up a log and was sawing it steadily. His eyes were narrowed; his face had a brutal look. Lucretia had seen that expression before, once when he pulled a little girl out of a stream which dragged her sullenly back, and once when he had puzzled weeks over a mathematical problem neither of them could solve.

She realized, as her heart grew cold at the sight, how dear a hope this boy had been. The walls and towers of Vassar, so clear to that inward eye all these years, and the voices of the men and women there who had struck the pitch of her life, always sounding in her ears, faded and died. She saw only the dreary, ruined town and heard only the rancorous voices of the men on the hill. She was only Lucretia Folger, who had worked

ceaselessly and failed. In her face, as they say one sees for an instant, in the face of a dying man just as he dies, the strength and fire of youth, was all the devotion, all the unquenchable purpose of her life. The boy turned towards her.

"You're real kind, ma'am," he said gently, though his jaw was set, "but I reckon I ain't quite small enough to travel East in your shoes. I can't take your money, but I'm going on to Yale next week, just the same, and I'm going through it, too, if I starve."

He jerked himself around the corner without another word.

Lucretia ran down the hill as if the weariness of the past was over forever. She met the old clergyman, the sharer, in a feeble way, of her aspirations for the town.

"Good news?" he asked, as he saw her face.

"A triumph for Vassar!" she cried, hurrying on.

The clergyman was a dull old man; but, as he looked at the mean street, the shambling school-house, and the slatternly people

idling about, and then remembered the face of the little woman, faded, marked with many a tired line, yet radiant from the spirit within, he murmured to himself,—

“ A triumph for Vassar ! ”

**NEITHER A LENDER NOR A
BORROWER BE**

Neither a Lender nor a Borrower be

“**I**F my sainted mother could only see this now,” said Betty.

“It certainly does look grand,” agreed her room-mate.

“And to think what a horror it was when she came. Poor lamb, her eyes were distended till they were like saucers when she beheld the dust under my desk and the unlaved dishes on the window-sill. But she was so terrible scared for fear you or Jan had left them there, she refrained from any reproach. Did you see her expression when you opened your bedroom?”

“It didn’t begin to be as bad as yours, thank you.”

“I had the wit to keep mine closed. Well, anyhow, Aunt Laura and her friend will see mother to-night. They’ll tell her how beautiful everything was. Will you

assist me at my afternoon tea? Aunt Laura is sort o' awesome to play with long alone."

"How often have I got to tell you that I tutor this hour? I'd rather meet a whole family tree of aunts than teach my Stoopid one Greek lesson; but money must be obtained if I don't intend to be a thing of 'shreds and patches' all winter."

The speaker, a small girl who always wore her hair in a pagoda on the top of her head and her head in the air to increase her height, gathered up her books and went out, calling back from the corridor, "If you don't stop gaping at that magnificence, you'll miss your train."

Still Betty lingered, enjoying the unwonted sight of her parlor swept, garnished, and in order. It was a charming room, with a spirit of its own. None of the silly souvenirs common to some college rooms cluttered it up. Equally refreshing was the absence of plaster lions, Bodenhausen Madonnas, and reproductions of Gibson's drawings. The decorations, curtains, and rugs all harmonized into one pleasant, soothing



The Glen

color plan, the furniture was carved oak, old and interesting, the couch was covered with huge satisfying pillows, on the walls hung delicate water colors and Copley prints. The books, too, the final test of a room, were not the usual Emertons, Sellars, and Adamases, but Stevensons, Balzacs, Thackerays, and their fellows. A deep bowl on the table filled with daffodils made a little spring in the November day. A table with a tea-kettle, a plate of thin, crispy lettuce sandwiches, and dishes of bonbons showed that the guests were not to "feast deep on lovely sights" only.

"'A man can mar a home, but only a woman can make it,'" murmured the owner of the parlor with an amused remembrance of a visit she and her mother had made that fall to her Freshman brother at Yale, to help him settle.

"Do something to these things, won't you?" he had implored, with a helpless wave towards the chairs, tables, and pictures, which had fallen into Anglo-Saxon attitudes at measured intervals about the room. "It

looks like a combination of church, furniture store, and country hotel now."

"My aunt and a somebody with her are going to visit me an hour on their way from Albany to New York," she called over the transom of the other half of the alleyway. "You're not to go in my beauty room and muss it up. After they've gone, we'll eat all the food they leave. Do you hear?"

"Oh, yes," came in a drowsy voice from within.

"We are very fond of our room," said Betty in her best company voice an hour later as she led her guests down the corridor. "Three of us—" she stopped.

A desolation lay before her such as some army of furniture-devouring locusts might have left behind them. Curtains, rugs, chairs, couch, table, pictures,—all were gone. Even the bowl that held the flowers was not. The daffodils hung their mortified heads over the edge of a milk-pitcher. Only the tea-table and the desks remained. Worse even than the nakedness of the land was it that boxes, bundles of newspapers,

portions of girls' wardrobes, and a heap of shoes lay scattered about the floor.

For a minute Betty stood perfectly still. What her family tenderly called "a nervous attack" had seized her. Then she laughed. What was the use in getting in a rage, anyhow?

"Some enemy hath done this," she cried, between spurts of laughter. "Sit down, won't you? Oh, you can't." She brought chairs from the bedrooms. Such as were not weak in important members were of an institutional hardness.

"Emily Fullham! Nancy! Come meet my aunt!" she called.

There was a slight rustle as of an involuntary leap towards flight, but in an instant two girls entered with polite greetings.

"Little Em'ly, what galoot has been at this room?" demanded Betty, then blushed fiery red as she thought, "Aunt Laura'll think I'm a choice bit if I let fall any more such conversational pearls as that!"

"Why, Betty, May Merchant and Anna-bel Steen came while you were out, and

took away your things. They said Janet told them they might have whatever they wanted. They dumped everything out of the couch and the drawers, that's where those things came from."

"And she knew I was to have guests!"

"Oh, well, you couldn't expect her to remember little things like that to-day when she can't on just ordinary occasions."

"This is Phil. Day, Aunt Laura. We have a great reception to-night, much gowns and a number of young gents—gentlemen—to see how we look in them. My roommate is chairman of the committee. She's responsible for the whole thing, she and the president of Phil."

"Are these raids on one another of frequent occurrence?" asked the guest who wasn't Aunt Laura.

"When there's a Hall Play on, or a chapter one, or anything like this, the girls swoop down on you for every last stick you own. Other times we just borrow soap and hats and note-books and Gym. suits and money, and things like that."

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"But among so many do not losses occur?"

"Oh, you never get anything back unless you go for it, and not always then," answered Betty.

"My beautiful bandanna pillow!" said Emily, with a doleful laugh.

"My two pairs of evening gloves!" said the other girl.

"My Japanese screen, my bust of Dante, my blue sash, my — Oh, many and many a my! But the worst borrow and keep I know was Miss Belton's silhouette.

"We had a regularly gorgeous Trig. Ceremonies in our class, Aunt Laura, if I say it as shouldn't,—that's a kind of play the Sophomores give to celebrate the end of mathematics forever. One scene had an old-fashioned room in it. We had a spinning-wheel, an old chest, old chairs, and all the furniture we wanted. But it was hard to find anything to hang on the walls. Somebody discovered a huge silhouette in Miss Belton's room, and said it was just the thing, only she'd never lend it in the world,

because it was a portrait of one of the professors that she bought at her first Senior auction. She went to the auction with her Senior 'crush' (they had such things in those days), and the crush blessed it, and the professor wrote her name on the back, and altogether it was a prize relic. I sought her and I besought her; and, though she was exceeding loath, I bore it away. I made the girls promise to watch it with all their eyes. In case of a fire or an earthquake or an assault by the audience, they were to seize that silhouette and bear it to a place of safety, though all else should perish.

"After the Ceremonies were over, I was so excited and elated I never once thought of that professor. I wouldn't have remembered my own father if he'd been hanging on the wall. Well, sirs, when I went over to the Hall the next morning, that precious souvenir was gone. I've never seen it since, though I offered rewards and sought it with tears."

"Wasn't Miss Belton angry?"

"I don't know. I never went near her

to explain. I didn't dare. Do let me give you tea and some sandwiches," jerking herself back to the duties of a hostess.

"There, that's over," announced Betty, returning to the room after escorting her guests to the cars. "The dear old parties were sort o' shocked at some things, me for one, I guess; but when they left they said, 'e liked it all,' or words of similar import. Where did all you babes come from?" sitting down in the place where the couch should have been, and looking around on the half-dozen girls likewise seated on the floor.

"Molly and I have been making up Gym. cuts," "Just come home from town," "Been all the afternoon in the library working on my constitutional history."

"Betty," the door was hurtled back, "I've got a telegram —"

"Oh, Eleanor!" She was Betty's roommate.

"From sister, telling me to meet her and father in New York to-day, go to the opera to-night, and bat around generally to-mor-

row. Isn't it lucky I haven't any guest for Phil.? Can I catch that five train, do you think? "

"Yes, if you hustle. We'll all help."

"I'll have to have that dress," pulling at the buttons of Betty's gown.

"My lands! It's all the garment I have! Everything's in the laundry or ripped up except this or my 'pike.' I'm going to wear that to-night," remonstrated Betty, beginning to slip out of it, however.

"I haven't a cloth suit to my name yet, and I can't go to New York in a golf skirt. You're the only girl that's just my size!"

"Take it! take it! I can be clothed in a bath-robe till evening."

"You can't stop to brush your hair: it looks passing queer, but people will think it a new style. They say Vassar girls are always six months ahead of the rest of the world," went on Betty, rummaging out a battered dress-suit case.

Emily counted the united funds of the two alley-ways, to see if their total equalled the fare to New York. Anna Adams ran

for an umbrella. Molly Omstead buttoned Eleanor's boots. Sally Dean dried the daffodil stems before pinning them into the traveller's coat. Eleanor buttoned, tied, and clasped various bands and belts, giving directions, like a general to his staff, meanwhile.

"Sal, run down to the laundry, won't you, dearie, and get me my clean handkerchiefs? If you don't see mine, take any one's that are respectable, in the unmarked room, you know; and just go into the lost office off Chapel coming back, and snatch a pair of rubbers you think will fit me. I've lost mine. And, oh, Betty, Neil's got my fur collar, ask her for it: she has my silk scarf, too. I don't know where my gloves are, Em. Hunt around in the most unlikely places you see, the washstand, and the wardrobe shelf. Nan Adams, do stick a few pins in my hair, it's just about ready to fall off. Goodbye, you dear old souls, I hope I haven't killed you. I'll bring you all some Huyler's."

"Well," gasped Betty, as Eleanor disappeared down the corridor with a girl on

either side to carry her belongings. "I feel a thought fatigued! This is the day of my life to wash and iron my hair. Help yourselves to food, dear friends, there's more in the box in Jan's room, and the tea is in my desk, lowest drawer." She appeared from her bedroom in a denuded-looking silk wrapper.

"Betty! what have you done to that? You look like a plucked chicken."

"Isn't it chaste? I ripped all the trimming off to put fresh on, then I never got around to it. Nobody's in the Senior Parlor, I hope," peering cautiously out. "I've got to get hot water anyhow, whether guests have come or no. Stick up 'Engaged,' Nan."

"Mustn't mermaids be pretty dears?" she said when she returned, shaking wet, stringing locks around her face. "I wish those committee girls had left a few cushions for the family. The floor is uncommon hard. Pab, please."

Every one ate and drank silently, basking in the comfortable sense that to-morrow was

lectureless Saturday,—“*la trêve de Dieu.*” The door opened without a knock.

“Hi, Bet, having a ball?” said the new-comer, known to her friends as the Japanese Cat from a fancied resemblance between her and the pictures of that domestic animal which adorn Celestial decorations.

“I call it plain actions, Cat, to walk right in over ‘Engaged,’” said the owner of the room.

“Engaged nothing! If you think there’s one up, you’re mistaken,” said the new-comer, beginning to eat the crumbs out of the box.

“Must have blown down.”

“I took it,” called a voice over the transom. “I wanted one, and I couldn’t find a scrap of paper in this whole house.”

“Upon my soul!” murmured Betty: “this borrowing custom has gone as far as I think proper. Oh, here’s some one else. Come *in!*”

A very tall, very handsome, very well-dressed young woman stood on the threshold. Her smile of greeting turned to one of amused surprise as she saw the disorderly

room, the girls lounging on the floor or the window-seat in Friday afternoon attitudes and costumes, and the damp, Medusa-like Betty.

"Miss Clafford," murmured the Japanese Cat. Betty said nothing. Her brown face was really pale.

Miss Clafford was a new teacher whose manners and customs were exciting much interest among the girls. They admired her deeply, not because she was a Ph.D. and had written a book which the critics praised, nor because she was a delightful woman of the world, but because she was both in one. Betty stood in great awe of her. She had ventured to call on her once, in her minute, artistic room, but she had not yet found courage to ask her into her own room. To think she should see it now for the first time! Betty could not rise above that.

"I wanted to talk to you, Miss Blake," began Miss Clafford, "about that little club we are thinking of forming."

"Club?" murmured Betty dazedly.

Emily placed a chair for the visitor, to the

horror of the others, who knew the infirmity of its joints. Miss Clafford began to talk easily. Betty listened in abjectness. She could not escape from her disorderly room and her own wet, draggled appearance. Some one apologized for the confusion. Miss Clafford laughed, and said something bright about being in the hands of one's friends at such seasons.

"She thinks just a chair or so and a couple of pillows have been taken," thought Betty bitterly.

"My friend, Eleanor Hale, lives here. I want you to see her house," said a girl's voice at the door. A deep voice, belonging to a man, answered.

Some one said, "Come." Betty always maintained it was Miss Clafford. In walked a girl, her elegant mother, her dignified father, her irreproachable brother. The situation was too serious for any embarrassment. Betty, her hair hastily bundled into a knob, rose, greeted her guests with warmth and grace. Every one seconded her. The family party went on its way, taking Miss Claf-

ford with it, filled with amused appreciation for a roomful of entertaining girls.

"Hang out a small-pox flag, quick!" cried Betty. "If I experience any more such raids, either to borrow or to view me, I shall have N. P. immediately." Betty maintained that nervous prostration was such an every-day affair lately that it took entirely too long to say it the number of times necessary.

"We must come in, Bet," called a voice.

"There's no one here for you to see," called back Betty. "Miss Blake is dead and buried, her executors are now listening to her last will and testament."

"What have you been doing here?" asked one of the two girls as she walked in. "Going home before the Mid-years?"

"If you have come to borrow, you may have the carpet or myself, there is naught else here."

"That's just what I want — you, honey," said one of the girls, a pretty blonde no larger than Betty.

"Me? Just as I am without one — dry hair?"

"John's coming to Phil.!"

"Oh, Carolyn, how good!"

"Oh, but there are horrid complications!"

"I don't believe it. Nothing connected with John can be horrid."

"Mr. Gilbert is coming, too."

"Who's he? Oh, I see. You want to devote all your time to John, and so you want me, even little me, to entertain this Mr. What's-his-name."

"I want you to be me."

"I to be *you*? Have you had a touch by sun, dear?"

"You know John is so—so—sort of—"

"Yes, I know, don't stop to explain his character."

"He wouldn't like it if any other man was here when he was, especially after he'd come hundreds of miles and had only the one night —"

"I'll take the other man away the minute he strikes the front hall, and you shan't see him again till the Glee Club sings 'Good-night.'"

"I mustn't see him at all. He and John

are the deadliest enemies! I found it out when I began to tell him about Helen's Western trip. As soon as I mentioned the Mr. Gilbert who had been so attentive to them, he looked outraged, said he knew him at college, and hoped he'd never hear his name again, he despised him utterly. I had to change the subject, quick. Of course, Mr. Gilbert will have to sit with me at the lecture, as he's my guest, even if you do take him in charge afterward. John's whole evening will be ruined. I can just see him getting stiffer and colder, and probably leaving at the end of the second dance."

"Well, for my part, if I had a man I should train him into— There, he's a hero and a saint. I won't say a word agin him. But why, oh, why, did you ask this other man, anyhow?"

"I never dreamed John could come. Last year, when mother and Helen were out West exploring around, they met him (his father and mine are old friends). He was awfully courteous and nice to them. Nobody ever supposed he'd come East till

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The Plaza

goodness knows when. But he has this fall. Mother always said she wanted to be especially kind to him because of his father and because he had been so nice to her. But you know the whole family is South for the winter. When mother heard that he was in town, she wrote for me to invite him up here to Phil. He probably wouldn't care to come, but, anyhow, it was all the family could do for him in the way of hospitality. He accepted yesterday, and John to-day. Everything will be ruined if they meet, yet I must entertain Mr. Gilbert."

"Go on."

"Don't you see what I want?"

"I must say I don't."

"You must be I, Miss Styvert."

"What?"

"This Gilbert man hasn't seen me since I was a little girl (he used to be a horrid shouty boy, I remember). He wouldn't know me from any other face o' clay, if he saw me. You will be Miss Styvert, will entertain him charmingly, dance with him, show him around college, and do everything

that I could a great deal better than I. He'll go off to his ranch thinking that mother has a delightful daughter, and that the Styvert family have done all they could under the circumstances to return his hospitality."

"Do you mean I am to pass myself off to this strange man as another girl? Carolyn Styvert, I can't and I won't!"

"Now, Betty, you can beautifully. You're the cleverest actor in college. Nobody can wiggle around a corner in class the way you can. You know you can get any earthly joy out of anybody if you stop being ferocious and begin to blarney. I wouldn't ask to *borrow* you this way, bodily, so to speak, if I knew any other scheme to get out of the box. I can't ignore Mr. Gilbert, and I can't make John unhappy. Oh, Betty dear, you're so fascinating, and quick, and resourceful, you could carry off any situation. Please don't desert me!"

"I realize that I am being won by honeyed words rather than by the rights of the case. It's business under false pretences,

which is a hanging offence, I'm thinking, and I shall make some never-to-be-mended break, as sure as the clock; but for your sake and that of the cran — highly organized John — I'll do it. You've got to post me up on family history, and cowboys, and his early youth, though. And, see here, I haven't a frock worthy the occasion. Mother's dressmaker's been going to send me my new evening gown for the last month. I didn't care when I thought I was going to sit with the populace in the gallery, but if I'm to have a little guest, I must wear something more festive than a white 'pike.' ”

“You shall have my new *muslin de soie*, you dear, obliging, good little soul.”

“The one you're going to take the eyes out of John with! Thank you, I'm not such a monster. My old pink silk will do if you'll lend me that huge fichu of yours and your grandmother's silver comb, and find something for my feet besides red bedroom slippers or bicycle boots.”

“I'll do anything on earth for you, Betty, whenever you need me.”

"You'll probably have to bail me out of jail for perjury and counterfeiting, later. You can say at the trial that I was hypnotized into my course of deception, for I certainly am. Otherwise I should have firmness enough to refuse at once. 'I misdoubt me,'" she added gloomily, "'if any good can come of promiscuous borrowings in a haythen country.'"

The corridors had begun to fill with girls fluttering expectantly about, when Betty stepped from her room. She had been up to Carolyn three separate times during the afternoon to tell her she could not be borrowed. Each time she had been implored into consenting. Now, fairly started in the affair, the excitement of it had begun to work. She would succeed, and she'd have some fun out of it, too.

Betty was all a delicious umber color, hair, eyes, and complexion. Dressed in a queer, autumnal pink gown, with a long waist and a fichu of old lace, her fluffy hair held in a top-knot by a tall silver comb, and high-heeled bronze slippers on her little

feet, she might have been her own Creole great-grandmother the night she danced at Washington's ball.

All the girls had come forth, to quote the newspaper account of the reception, "from grubs into butterflies." Even a plain girl is pretty in a light, low-necked gown, and pretty ones are altogether lovely. Groups of friends were hurrying off together to secure front seats in the gallery, from which they could see and criticise other people's guests. These girls would sit on the stairs after the lecture was over, watching the life in the corridors below, dance once with some one else's man, raid the waiters for supplies of salad and ices, which they would carry away for a private spread in some room, and perhaps have as much fun, in a different way, as those who rush about trying to get the men they are with back to the girls (never at the place they appointed) who are running these men, and return to the place where they are to meet their next partner before the dance is all over. Girls are not as experienced in these matters as men.

Therefore much confusion is the result that night, and many explanations the next morning. "Hunted for you everywhere, honest, so I just took him down in the Senior Parlor through the interval." "He couldn't dance one step, but he believed he could. I thought you'd never come to take him off my hands." "I didn't mean to cut my dances with your brother, but I must have misunderstood your number, so —"

Those who have no guests sit serenely aloft, enjoying the lights, the music, and the many pretty girls in artistic frocks, also, though viewed from afar, the good-looking, athletic young men from Yale, Princeton, and Harvard.

The adaptability of the "eternal feminine," a trait — or a gift? — fostered by college life, shows itself in the girl who yesterday played basket ball with pluck and dash, this morning translated a Horatian ode into mellow, flowing English, and now stands in a graceful attitude, listening to her guest's story with such appreciative interest that he will call her, to-morrow, the cleverest girl he ever

met, though the truth is he did all the talking himself. Perhaps she is, for she is wise enough to know that "when a woman speaks she is working for herself, but when she is silent Nature is working for her."

Occasionally a dancer, hurrying from one room to another, snatches time to whisper to some of the on-lookers, "See that tall man over there? He asked me what I studied. Wasn't that delicious?" or "That babe yonder is a *professor* in a college. I mixed him up with Neil's brother, and asked him if it was his first year at college. I thought I'd please the brother, for he isn't out of the prep. school yet," or "Did that gigantic party ruin my gown when he walked up the train? Look quick."

Betty saw Carolyn going off towards Chapel on John's arm, so radiant to have all made smooth for his evening that she never noticed her borrowed double.

"Now then," thought the double, as the messenger handed her a card, "come up under the bat, Miss Betty,—no, Miss Carolyn, and show what you can do."

Mr. William Wordwell Gilbert certainly wore nice shoes and had an agreeable voice. It was a long way up to his coat lapel, so he must be tall. This was as high as Betty dare look till they were seated in Chapel.

"I feel as if I were a chicken stealer," she thought as she sank into her seat. "He doesn't know it if I am, but he'll think something queer if I act this way." Whereupon she faced her guest boldly, though conversation did not flow from her as yet. Fortunately, the guest was a ready talker himself.

"A friend of mine, Fairbairn Blake —" Mr. Gilbert was in the midst of a story. Betty jumped at the name. Blake was common enough, but surely nobody but her own big brother owned the two names together.

"Do you know any one by that name, Miss Styvert?" asked her guest.

"No — yes — a little," with a blush which even her brown cheeks could not hide.

The guest smiled.

"Thinks I'm a bread-and-butter school-

girl, or else I'm vastly interested in his friend and ashamed to show it," she thought with inward rage.

"It may be the same man, he has a sister here at Vassar, I believe: do you know her?"

Betty spoke in a determined voice.

"It must be Betty Blake. I know her." She was keeping hold of herself that she might not rush out of Chapel.

The girl in the next pew turned and stared at Betty with an amazed face. It was the Japanese Cat, and she had overheard. She touched Betty's lap.

"I want you to meet —"

An introduction! Betty and Carolyn had so arranged all the dances that none save those initiated in the secret might be encountered. But Chapel had not been remembered.

"Will you please move down to the end of the seat?" said Betty, ignoring the Cat utterly. "I feel the air from the window."

The next minute she discovered that the window was closed, a fact patent to her guest's eyes as well as her own.

"He now thinks me a lunatic and very rude," she said inwardly, recalling the push which she had given him in her anxiety to get away.

She began to talk rapidly, inwardly praying for the appearance of the lecturer.

"Which is Miss Blake?" asked the man in the pause Betty made to catch her breath. "I saw Blake last night. I happened to tell him I was coming up here, and he said to meet his sister if I could."

"I don't see her," said the miserable Betty. "Here is the lecturer."

All through the lecture she was thinking, "It'll never do for Carolyn to be Miss Blake since he knows Fair. How can I get hold of her to tell her?"

Carolyn had promised to be in the Lecture-Room at the end of the first dance, to take Mr. Gilbert from Betty. The latter was then to meet John in the Faculty Parlor. If she could only get this wretched man there before Carolyn, and waylay her in the corridor, all would be well. She hurried him out of the dancing-hall, up the stairs at a

round pace, treading on various girls in her ascent. There was Carolyn by the elevator; and, yes! she was coming towards them.

"I believe you are hunting for me, aren't you, Carolyn?" said that young woman in a perfectly calm voice.

Betty tried to slip behind her partner; but he was provokingly polite, and stepped back, too. There was no chance to warn Carolyn by making up a face. With the stiffness and precision of some manager announcing a new member of his troupe, she said, "I want you to meet,— Mr. Gilbert, Miss *White*."

Carolyn was a self-possessed girl, yet she could not restrain a violent blink, succeeded by an agitated and questioning smile. Betty glared and frowned portentously, too desperate to mind the guest.

"I'll have to find Harriet Soule. She has the next dance with him, and she'll be sure to speak of Carolyn as Miss Blake if I don't tell her." This was one of the two girls taken into the secret to help entertain.

Finding Harriet was not so easy. Betty wound and pushed through the crowd on

the stairs and on second corridor, peered into all the parlors, darted in and out of all the little recesses given over to divans and non-dancers. She saw John standing patiently in the Faculty Parlor waiting for her, but she could not stop for him. She thrust herself into a group of girls and men, thinking that among them she saw Harriet's black net gown.

"Miss Blake, may I —" said one.

Betty pulled herself away, leaving her friend full of wrath. She had seen Harriet coming out of the hall. The dance was over. She was on her way to find that nightmare of a man.

"Harriet!" She planted herself directly in her path, the crowd was too dense to admit of drawing any one aside. "Miss Blake's name is Miss White."

"What?" blankly.

Betty glanced at the man with Harriet. "I'll never see him again," she thought. Then aloud, "You are not to call Carolyn Styvert Blake, but White. *Do you understand?*" savagely.

The other nodded. Betty caught a glimpse of an astonished look on the man's face, then hurried on.

"I shall dance every dance with that man myself. He can think I don't know any girls or I have fallen in love with him at first sight, I don't care which. I can't trust him to any one else," she groaned to herself.

Mr. Gilbert was so good a dancer and so interesting a companion that the strain on Betty's nerves began to relax. They went down the corridor at the end of the waltz to get lemonade.

"Hello, a fellow I know," said the man. "Shall we speak to him?"

Betty looked around. It was Harriet Soule's partner, and a Freshman.

"I don't know the girl," she cried desperately, but the other did not hear. He was shaking hands with the man and bowing to the girl.

"Mr. — [some unintelligible name], Miss Styvert," with awful distinctness. "I suppose no introduction is necessary with you," smiling at Betty and the Freshman.

"I have seen Miss Bl —"

"This year's Freshman class is so large that the Seniors don't know all its members yet," broke in Betty very loudly. The Freshman was an acquaintance of Carolyn's, and was perfectly aware who Betty was. "This is my favorite two-step, goodbye." She walked down the corridor, leaving the man no choice but to follow.

"I wonder if I look as haggard as I feel," trying to catch a glimpse of herself in a mirror. "If I live through to-night, I am resolved to lead a better life. If it was my own plan, I'd up and tell him the truth now, even if he got as mad as a hatter, but the Styverts are so punctilious, and Carolyn said he was, too. Oh, I suppose I'll live till midnight, somehow. Nice bringing up he must think I have! So must Harriet's man. Pretty, graceful manners!"

"Betty! Wait a minute, Betty Blake!" The voice came from somewhere close to her.

Betty fairly ran down the corridor. A knot of people were talking by the stairs. They filled all the space, and were as dense as a wall.

"I heard some one say Miss Blake's name as we passed," said the man. "She must be right near. I'd like to see her."

Betty looked straight ahead without a word. People had never acted so at Phil. before, rushing out at one from rooms, seizing one for introductions, and recognizing old friends half-way down the corridor. She had forgotten about her desire for the two-step. She wanted to get some place where no one could see them. Solitude was the only safety. A curtained corner at the end of second was empty. Betty hurried to it, and sat down. She laughed a little. It wasn't life and death, after all. And, really, the situations had been so absurd.

"How many years is it since we used to play together?" began the man.

"It must have been in a previous incarnation," laughed Betty.

"You haven't forgotten the good times summers, on the farm, have you?" bending a little nearer.

"Never spent an hour on a farm in my life. Hope he isn't going into the flora and

fauna of such regions," thought Betty, then aloud with emphasis, "Oh, no."

"How's that little cousin who used to be with us so much?"

"If I only knew even the sex of It!" inwardly. "Well. Grown-up, like the rest of us."

"What was his name, anyhow?"

"Hasn't your exciting life on a Western ranch blotted out that humdrum little farm? There, that was a neat way of turning a corner," she congratulated herself.

"You'll have to help me out on that name, Miss Styvert. It was a queer one, too, that I'd be likely to remember."

"Why, oh, why, didn't I get a list of Carolyn's relations, unto the third and fourth generation?" Aloud, "Ethelbert Jenkins," then inwardly, "That is the name of one of my cousins. It's a relief to tell the truth once."

"That doesn't sound like it."

"I think I know my own cousin's name," with dignity.

"Do you remember the fort we built in

the brook, and the day we made ourselves a little hut to live in forever?" getting still nearer.

"The sentimental Bit! Won't I rejoice over Carolyn with tales of how she played with the boys in her infancy? I always knew somebody began to make love to her as soon as she could walk." The thought so charmed Betty that she smiled benignly on the stranger.

"Where's Mr. Dimont now? I always had a great respect for him, he was such a serious character."

"He's — he's there still, on the farm, you know," desperately. "I'll die soon," to herself.

"Busy and important as ever?"

"Oh, yes, he drives everybody to town now. He's married."

"Married!"

"I mean divorced. No, no, his wife died."

"Married! Divorced! Really, Mr. Dimont is getting on in his ways." The man laughed low and with evident pleasure.

"I've done it now! Mr. Dimont is probably some old woman-hater or an *enfant* of unmatrimonial years."

"Dogs of the Dandy Dimont breed are very bright, I admit," went on the man.

"Dogs!" jerked out Betty. Then in rage and confusion, "I have a dance now with another man. I'll take you to your partner."

She walked so fast that further reminiscences were impossible. She was sure she heard the man laugh to himself. Could he suspect? Around the corner by the musicians she darted, almost into the arms of John, who was peering over the heads of the crowd for some one.

"Why, Betty Blake!" he cried in a hideously loud voice. "I haven't seen you this evening. Will Gilbert, you in this part of the world?" Betty caught John's arm. She might be able to prevent bodily injury to the other man. John and the stranger pumped arms up and down violently amid much "Glad to see yous," "How'd you get heres?"

"John," too amazed to think of her secret, "aren't you and Mr. Gilbert deadly enemies?"

"Not to my knowledge. Pardon me, there's Carolyn,—Miss Styvert,—Will. I'll have to leave you."

"There was another Gilbert at college with John, possibly that's the deadly enemy. Miss Blake, now the cat is officially out of the bag, won't you tell me why you have tried to be Miss Styvert all the evening?"

"Have you known all the time?"

"Yes. I told you I saw your brother last night. I was in his rooms. He showed me a picture of his Vassar sister, that I might be able to identify her. I have a good memory for faces."

"And to think," mourned Betty, "that I was taught to write in copy-books each one of which contained, 'Honesty is the best policy.'"

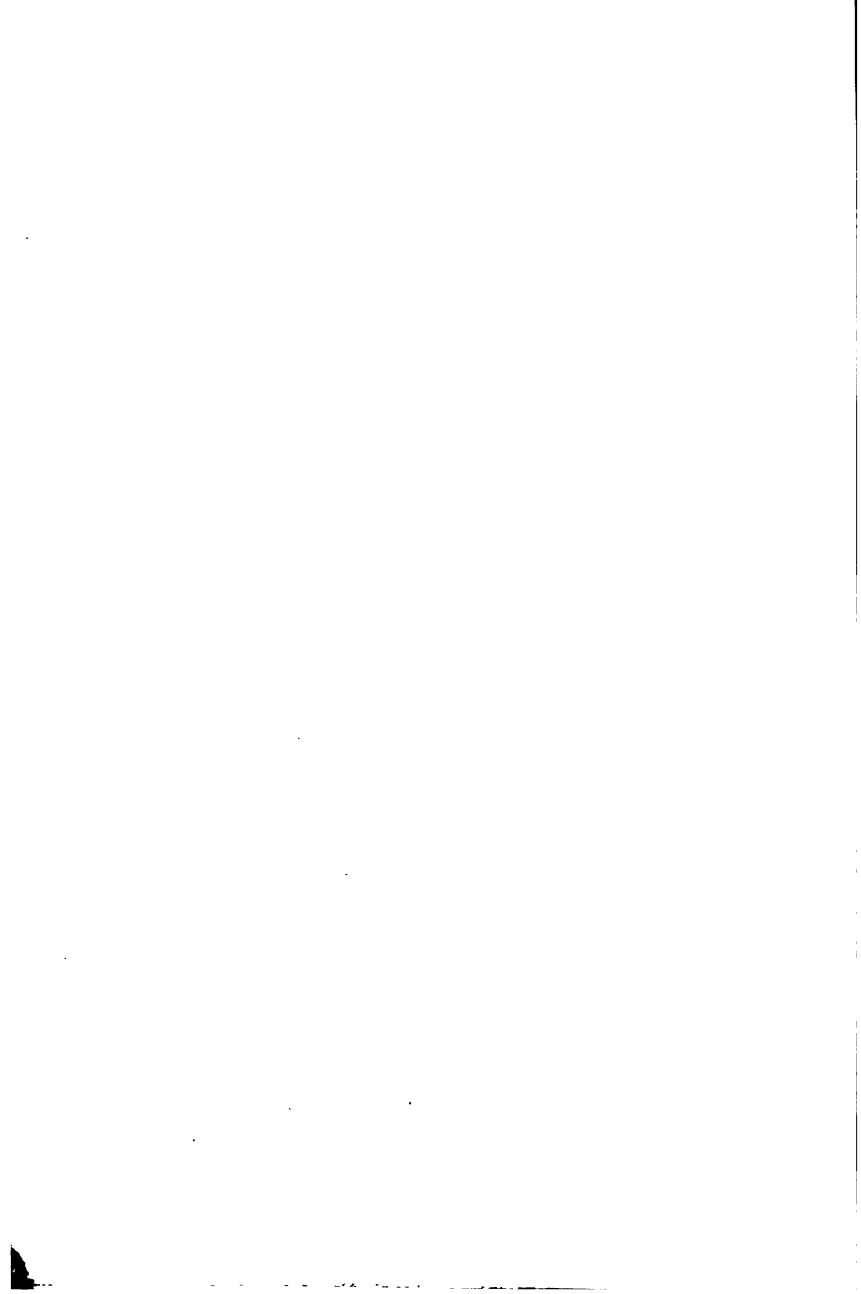
"Suppose we go back to that agreeable corner, and you confess the whole dark crime."

After the Glee Club had sung, the guests

had gone, and the corridors were dark and lonely, Carolyn stole down to Betty's room. She found her curled up in bed, and reciting to an audience, likewise ready for bed, the tragedies of the evening.

"Carolyn, your man — not John, the unattached one — is a terrible nice person. I purred all the last of the evening, I was that pleased. But my sufferings before John's revelation! You just listen to me, everybody. I'm never going to borrow anything again, and I'm never going to lend anything. My experiences to-day, winding up with the loan of my truth, sobriety, and sanity, have been such that I hereby take a vow unto myself. Who came in just then?" Calling into the dark parlor, "Nan Adams? If you're after my steamer rug for your bed, it's in the left-hand corner. Take it with my blessing. You'll never get another thing out of me." Then to the laughing girls, "'This time don't count.'"

THE CLAN



The Clan

IT was Bonfire Night on the lake. Every one who could get, by any means whatsoever, a pair of skates, whether they could use them or not, was down on the ice. Laughter, loud, jolly voices, and the crack of hockey sticks struck out high echoes from the bank. Beginners who had been able to keep up as long as the band did, promptly fell down when the music ceased. When it started up again, all skated and all sang.

Long lines of girls, their hands on one another's shoulders, prison lock-step fashion, swept up the lake and back, singing. Rows of girls, twelve broad, the weak skaters in the centre, swung slowly along, also singing. Solitary figures flew by, recognizable for an instant in the glare of the fire. Little groups of twos and threes cut "eights" in the ice together, and did other post-graduate acts, or wavered excitedly along with thrills and

cries of alarm. A few bloodless beings shivered by the fire or were content to be pushed about in chairs. But every one sang and laughed, and was for the night and the hour without care or sorrow.

"Race you round the island and back!" cried a skater, as the music stopped while the musicians thawed out their fingers.

"All right!" answered the skater next to her, who was doing the "double roll."
"Now, one, two — off!"

The two swept up the lake around the mound of earth called politely "the island," and back, past the fire, to the goal,— the dock where, in summer, the boats are tied.

"Come on, everybody, double chain up and down to the last waltz!" called a tall girl, starting out from a bunch of others.
"Here, Elizabeth, catch on! Hurry up, Myra!"

The bunch separated into a long line extending half-way across the lake.

"Are you ready?" cried the leader.
"Where's Ethel Oakley? Catch on there,

Ethel!" to a solitary figure skating on rather unsteadily just ahead. The skater did not turn, though she was directly in the path.

"That's not Ethel," said some one.

The line wavered for an instant, then opened.

"Whoever it is, give me your hand, quick! Don't break the line!" cried the leader again. "Cross your other hand to Nan there, now! and swing, good, too!"

Hands clasped and heads down against the wind, which was beginning to stir a bit, they started slowly forward. Then, as the music quickened and the swing gathered strength, the girls went faster and faster till the line swooped down on the goal,—in a way that made timid skaters scuttle to the sides of the lake—up against the fence, where it broke in disorder and laughter.

"I could skate forever if I only had music!" cried some one.

"Couldn't you! I can't bear to go in. I feel so waked up I never want to stop."

"Let's cheer the class!" cried the leader.

"What's the matter with Ninety-blank? It's all right! Again!"

All over the lake voices joined in the cheer, with much noise.

"They're at it again! Did you ever know anything like those Freshmen!" said a Sophomore, unbuckling her skates wrathfully. "I expect to hear them cheer for themselves in Chapel next. You'd think they invented the lake and the ice and the art of skating."

"A mighty silly performance, I call it," said the girl addressed as Myra. "I do think Ninety-blank is too fresh to tolerate much longer." She spoke hoarsely, for she had just been cheering with all her strength.

"You wouldn't dare say that if you weren't Ninety-blank yourself," retorted a fat little seal of a girl.

"You'd assault me with intent to kill if I weren't, I suppose."

"Who was that girl we took on our line?" asked the one who had raced with Myra.

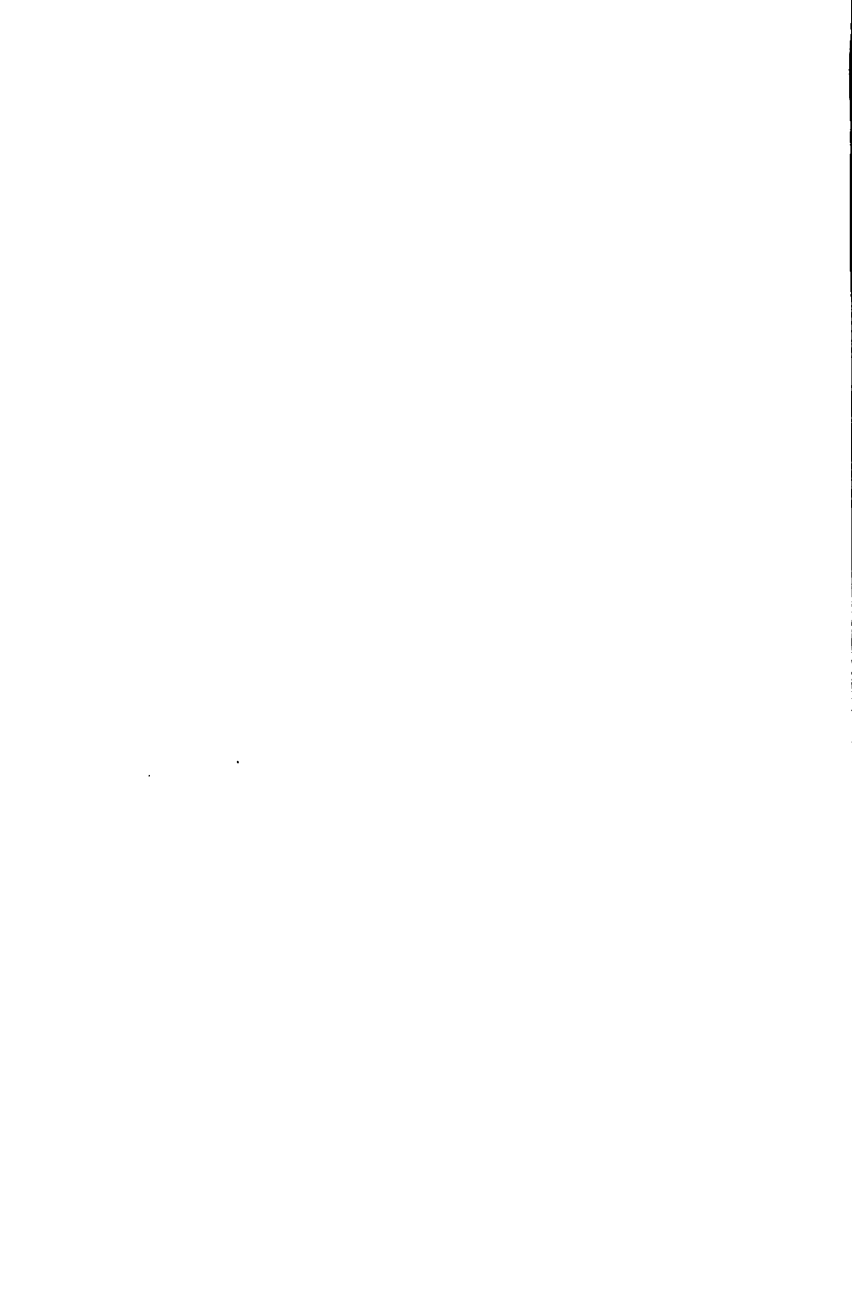
"I think it was a girl in our class who



The Main Building



The Observatory



lives on fourth, near you people. I can tell her by her queer cap," answered the seal.

The musicians began packing up their instruments, the fires were burning low, and on the intense stillness of the winter night came the far-away clang of a bell, the signal, in the old days, that in half an hour lights must be out.

The skaters hung their skates over their shoulders, pulled their coat collars up higher, and climbed the bank to the campus. Some of them still sang, others were talking, and calling back and forth. There was much noise and laughter, for those two are inseparable from fun when one is twenty. Girls just crossing the road shouted to girls half-way up the campus invitations to come to their rooms for hot chocolate, or rarebit, or Aunt Jemima butter cakes, or some of the extraordinary but palatable tinned comestibles bought from the College store. Other people made appointments to go into town in the morning,—the beautiful Saturday morning, when the lazy can sleep, and the industrious do special topics, unharried by lectures,—to

study ethics together, to go swimming in the Gym., to make blue prints, to organize a chapter play contest committee, to do all the things you never have time for except on that blessed holiday. Jokes, chaff, stories of the day's work, immensely interesting or amusing, were going up and down the line. Here and there you caught scraps of quieter conversation.

"He said my class work was good, but my lab. was so unscientific that —"

"Duruy is just fine on that, it's promised to me the first hour, then you can —"

"If we can get seats, we're going to hear 'Valkyrie.' Up in Paradise, you know, where you only have to pay —"

"I'll play you a game of hockey in the morning for a dinner at Smith's."

It was one of the times when you realize what a good old place College is and how you love it. Myra and her fellow-skater, Elizabeth Forsythe, walked slowly up, swinging hands and listening to the girl ahead, who was reciting gems of her own and other people's manufacture, after the similitude of

“Johnnie put poison in his mother’s tea,
She died in dreadful agony.
Johnnie’s father was awfully vexed,
He said, ‘Really, John, what next?’”

Elizabeth talked little, ever. She laughed at the verses, but Myra called out briskly, “Cat, you grow feebler-minded every day. You must spend hours hunting those things out and then learning them.”

“I wish you’d stop saying ‘those things,’ Myra, it shows you haven’t ‘the spirit.’”

“The spirit of what?”

“There! after that it’s useless to answer you. Anybody who has the spirit knows what it is.”

“We’re going to have chocolate in Elizabeth’s room, Cat, you may come and partake if you’ll leave the spirit behind.”

“I can’t: it’s an inalienable portion of my mind-stuff. I’m going to get neatly wadded with food elsewhere, thank you. Please extend your bid to to-morrow evening. I’m not invited out then.”

The two girls entered the “marble palace,” passed the elevator, always prompt to

set a worthy example of early retiring, up to fourth, where they separated. Myra kept on towards the tower. Elizabeth entered the corner single. This was a jolly little room. All the useful unornamentals were concealed behind screens. A peace and order, as tranquillizing as it was novel, brooded over each book and pillow. Elizabeth pinned up the neatest of "Engaged's," changed her skating clothes for a wrapper, and stretched out on the couch with a happy, sleepy sigh.

Myra walked in without knocking, set out the chafing-dish, and began to make chocolate in a business-like way.

"We've only ten minutes, Elizabeth," she said, as she stirred and sweetened the beverage.

"Take 'a babe cut' with me to talk. We haven't had a real talk one for weeks. Tomorrow's Saturday."

"The mail takes no account of Saturday. I'll cut though, a little while."

Myra served the chocolate, hunting out crackers and potted tongue to go with it.

They ate in companionable silence, for, although the object of the cut was to talk, neither seemed in a hurry to begin. Occasionally they smiled at one another a little, because they were such good friends and were so comfortable and happy.

Neither girl was pretty. Elizabeth's face was too colorless, Myra's too odd. Both were good to look at, however, Myra because of the energy and tonic frankness that shone from her, Elizabeth because of her dignity and air of high breeding. Both, all unknown to themselves, served as banners to the warring parties at strife over the question, "Is Vassar democratic?"

"Look at Elizabeth Forsythe," said the negatives. "Isn't she a regular snob? She doesn't know the names, even, of half the class, she doesn't speak to three-fourths of it, and she doesn't think any one in it is worthy to talk with her except about a dozen girls who are her intimate friends."

"Look at Myra Hume," retorted the affirmatives. "Isn't she Elizabeth's best friend, and isn't she a pal of the nicest

girls of the class? And doesn't she tutor, and tote the mail, and dust rooms, and mend clothes? And isn't she as poor as can be, and dressed like a frump?"

All of which was true, but proved nothing. Elizabeth cared not at all for money, position,—outside of College or within it,—good clothes, or any of the nameless possessions which seem to determine whether a girl is "a swell" or "a nobody." It is love of those *per se* that make the true snob, as Thackeray, who stood godfather for the word, understood it. She would have welcomed to her business and her bosom the clever, ambitious daughter of the little grocer in her own town, who lived in the room below, as royally as she would have the daughter of "a hundred earls," if such a young woman were among Vassar students, if the former were what Elizabeth called, with her indescribable accent, "a lady." The point lay there. One could not be "a lady," argued Elizabeth from a narrow life and an unimaginative nature, unless one had been reared, not only in one's

own proper person, but in that of one's ancestors, in refinement and among the polishing forces due to wealth. She respected, oh, immensely, the self-made girl "whittled into shape with her own jack-knife"; but, as a friend, she would have none of her. She had only a few friends, as the girls said: she was content to have it so. She opened her eyes in amazement often when she heard some acquaintance say, "Oh, yes, So-and-so is rather coarse-grained, but she's no end of fun and a thoroughly clever girl." How could they find any pleasure in such people? If some of her own comrades were insipid or dull, as they undoubtedly were, at least every one was "a lady."

Elizabeth's intimacy with Myra had not made any more of a "cosmopolite" of her. Myra was "a lady," by birth and training. Her poverty and her consequent frumpiness were the fortunes of war.

Myra's own place in "society" — as Vassar knows it — was due to powers quite outside of herself,—she had "a pull." Her two sisters, one graduated six years before,

the other only two years, had been marked figures in their day. They had been neither poor nor frumpy, but resplendent, lavish, brilliant girls, born to lead anywhere. One had been president of her class, the other of Students' Association, and, what does not follow as a matter of course, foremost in the social life. They were still spoken of with admiration by even those classes which knew them not, personally. When Myra entered, she found Seniors and Juniors glad to know her for the sake of her popular, powerful sisters. And, if the Seniors and Juniors take a girl up, her own class are sure to.

The money had all departed from the Hume family, after the sudden American fashion. Myra was a shabby girl who tutored, worked in the library, distributed the mail, executed commissions in town, copied essays, sewed on dress braids, washed hair, darned stockings, cleaned bicycles, and did twenty other offices for the students to pay her College expenses. But was she not Annette and Margaret Hume's sister? Every girl left in College who had belonged

in the charmed circle of which Margaret Hume had been the centre rallied around Myra immediately to show to outsiders that once "a swell" always "a swell." They acknowledged no falling from grace.

Elizabeth's sister and Myra's sister had been friends, therefore Elizabeth at once sought out Myra. To her the fact that Myra was working her way through College proved her favorite theory, that "a lady" can never lose caste, no matter what she does.

Doubtless Myra, endowed with many of her sister's gifts, would have risen to offices and honors in College. Nowhere is the saying truer than at Vassar, that water finds its own level. But that she should be in the heart of all things gay and entertaining in her Freshman year was more than unlikely.

"Myra," said Elizabeth, setting down her cup, "what is that girl's name,—the one on the ice?"

"Which one?"

"The girl Neil took in on our line just before we came up."

"That lives around by me, you mean,— Lydia Agnes Waitely. I know not only everybody's front and last name, but their middle ones besides."

"She must be an odd girl."

"Why?" idly.

"She skated all the evening alone. I saw her doing it all this afternoon, and yesterday, too. I've noticed her lately. She's always by herself. I think a girl who never wants any one with her has a singular nature."

"Maybe she does want some one, but can't have them. This is an unfriendly place to some people."

"Unfriendly! Listen to that."

"That" was the population of fourth playing about the corridor before going to bed, and making as much noise as a lot of school-boys. Half the Freshman Class seemed to be calling, "Good-night, old Mary," "Good-night, honey," "Thank you for your buns," "Had a grand time at your ball," and other farewells. An all-embracing *camaraderie* and good-fellowship filled the

corridor and overflowed to fifth centre and third. Certainly, all the class to-night agreed with the old lady of the nursery rhyme, who thought this world "a dear, sweet place." It was the fortnight following the Mid-years, and that is always a jolly season. If you have escaped the wreck and ruin of that time of tribulation, even though it be so as by fire, your heart is full of a gratitude so profound as to be in itself a joy. The new semester with its alluring promise of opportunities for you to do the great things you failed to in the past is still so young that your illusions are untarnished. If you flunked at the exam., at least you know the worst,—the blow has fallen, and you still are on the earth: you are taking a good breath before tutoring for the re., some time in April.

"Yes, our own crowd burbling together. But Miss Waitely isn't there, nor Miss Oberley, nor half the class."

"But they are with their own friends somewhere."

"I tell you I don't believe Miss Waitely

has any friends. She doesn't go with us; and who but us lives up here?"

"Probably her friends live some place else."

"They're not the Giffords, Alice Putnam, and Florence Hillis and those girls, I know. She looks too nice to be friends with the Hillyer and the Monly and the rest of the Objectionables."

"But there are several nice, quiet sort of girls that she could become acquainted with. That girl with the lovely reddish hair and that other little one that limps and that one always with her. I don't know who they are, but they look as if they would be congenial to her."

"One of those lives in a cottage and the others at Strong. Besides, I don't suppose you ever noticed that it is hard to get to know any one here. You can't go up to a girl, and say, 'Helloa, I'm quiet, and you look so, too. Let's be friends.' Acquaintance has to come about naturally."

"I knew every one of our girls in a week."

"Of course you did, You and I had

met before we came. Sally Dean was your school friend, Barbara Sterling's sister and yours were pals. Lois Duncan is Bab's cousin, Arna Kellar rooms with Bab. Margaret Uhler went to school with Lois, Emily and Nan room with Lois. Betty's sister is a Senior: when she was a Freshman, she was Margaret's sister's best friend. It's a regular House that Jack Built. How do you think it would be if you hadn't known a soul when you entered?"

"I still believe that unless a girl is very strange she'll have some friends by the end of six months."

"Elizabeth, you vex me. You're so narrow about such lots of things."

Elizabeth laughed serenely.

"Going to join the Sunday night supper club Bert Alden is getting up?" she said by way of changing the conversation.

"Can't. Costs too much. I prefer, myself, our suppers *à deux*, where you pay and I do the work. But I don't want to hinder you from joining."

In the discussion of the new club the unknown Freshman was forgotten,

About a week after this Bonfire Night Lydia Agnes Waitely lay on the couch in the "pest-house," waiting for Lizzie, the little nurse, to bring up her dinner. She was not really ill, just German measles, and, therefore, dinner was something to look forward to. Moreover, Lizzie was a human being, the only one besides Mrs. Flett and the doctors that Lydia saw all through the long day. It was dark in the room and rather warm. Lydia rose and opened the window. She stood looking out towards Music Hall, now alight, from which came the muffled click, click of pianos. A party of girls were coming home from Sunset Hill. One of them evidently went in to Music Hall, for Lydia heard the others call out goodbye.

"Oh, girls," suddenly cried the Music Hall person,— Lydia could hear what she said perfectly,— "did you know there's a girl here sick with small-pox?"

"Nonsense! It's only another newspaper scare," answered one of the others, Barbara Sterling. Lydia knew the voice.



Sunset Hill



The Road to Sunset Hill

"No, sir, it's small-pox. She's in the pest-house."

"That's all you know," said a third girl, Myra Hume. "It's roseola, what Amy West had Thanksgiving time."

"Who is it, anyhow?" asked somebody.

"That girl in our class lives next to you. I don't know her name," answered she of the small-pox alarm.

"Oh," said some one. No one asked any more questions. Apparently, the subject had no further interest for them.

Lydia closed the window, laughing. The word "small-pox" would spread like a fire. In a week Prexy, the doctors, and Mrs. Kendrick would be harassed by unnumbered letters and despatches from alarmed parents. All because she, Lydia Waitely, had the smallest of German measles.

Then she remembered the answer, "That girl in our class, I don't know her name," and the indifferent "Oh." She stopped laughing, and pushed her face into the pillows. They were wet in a moment with tears as bitter as perhaps a girl ever shed.

“Why don’t they know my name! They don’t care to know it! and this is February!”

Many a girl is homesick at college, and yearns for that friendly place where interest in her is a matter of course and she need do nothing but be to gain love. The unhappiness of such ones is nothing compared to that of the girl who wants friends and cannot make them.

Lydia was that sort of a girl. She came from a small place with few young people in it. Those few were quiet, mild-natured girls who studied, performed the various duties of their lives, and played in a sober, pleasant way. Lydia knew as little about fun as she did about sadness. She came to College because she had been the bright pupil at her school and the principal had persuaded her parents that it would be for her happiness and her well-being to take her brightness to a larger field. Lydia expected to work hard, learn a great deal, and bear away some honors, as she had done at school. She had never met a College girl. She did not dream of that life of College, wholly

outside of books and more potent in its influence than any of them. Perhaps, if she had talked with a graduate, she would not have understood any better. The thing is so difficult to describe.

By the time she had been at College a month, she had discovered that there were girls in the world utterly unlike any she had hitherto known. They amazed her,—those gay, jolly, happy-go-lucky beings who laughed and joked and played through the livelong day. They fascinated her. They made her miserable. All about her was what she called, after the title of one of her favorite magazine stories, “fulness of life.” Yet she was as much apart from it as if she were still in her dull New England home. A clan, loyal to itself, sufficient to itself, yet admired by the “Uitlanders,” the leader of all the good times, of all the “society,” lived about her. She was an alien, whose very name it knew not.

If Lydia had roomed at Strong, where there was a handful of studious, serious girls like herself, she might have been

happy at once. If she had roomed in first south, the noisy, lively set which ruled that corridor would have extended to her its friendship, simply because she was a Freshman and within its precinct.

Chance put Lydia down on fourth, the floor on which lived Elizabeth Forsythe, Myra Hume, and the rest of the class chiefs. They were all connected with one another in the endless chain Myra had described. They drew the cord close about the clan and looked keenly before they loosened it to admit a stranger, however attractive. They could not be expected to take in Lydia, a shy girl, with no single quality of mind, body, or estate, to set her aside from twenty other Freshmen they did not know. They did not snub her. She would have been glad if they had. They just were not aware she existed. She had lived in a single in that Chinese puzzle made up of nests of little rooms by the North Tower now for six months. She was as lonely as the day she entered.

She might have rubbed up acquaintance-

ship with the girl who sat next to her at the table, or with the two who had essay interviews and Gyms. the same time she did. These had friends, too, who would become hers. But they were all just like the girls home, just like Lydia herself. She longed to be a part of that different, delightful world opened before her. She longed for "fulness of life."

They made such jokes about their work, these girls, they took it so lightly, so humorously, yet some of them were both deeper and more original than she, and one was openly pointed out as the cleverest girl in the class. They were taking the very heart out of College, while she —

Once she had known what it was to be like them, to be them. That night on the ice she had held their hands hard, had skated and sung, and laughed with them. It was over so soon! And the walk up to College alone, behind the united clan, had seemed so much lonelier than usual in contrast.

The doctors pitied Lydia's solitary days in the "pest-house," where she had been

since the morning after the Bonfire. They brought her books, and told her stories and bits of College news to cheer her up. In reality, Lydia was less forlorn than when in her own room: she "played" here that the whole class would come pouring in on her, did not the quarantine forbid.

But, however much you may pretend in the daylight, when night comes you feel, like Alice, that it is hard work to pretend alone in the dark. Lydia's mind went whirling through the nights when she sat by herself studying, hearing all about her the voices and laughter of girls running back and forth between rooms; the afternoons when she walked about the campus alone, meeting parties of jolly friends, who turned out for her as they would for a tree; the Saturdays when she read by herself, watching from her window troops starting out to wheel or drive; about the whole of her lonesome, hungry year.

She was glad to hear Lizzie's step on the stair. No Lizzie entered, however. The new-comer was Mrs. Flett, and a girl,—an-

other measles victim, evidently. Lydia's heart gave a sudden jerk at the possibilities flashing through it, for the girl was Elizabeth Forsythe, chief of the clan.

Eight long days, of twenty-four long hours each, went over the heads of the measles patients before they were allowed to join their fellows once more.

The "pest-house" is a better place to grow acquainted than a desert island. There are possibilities of solitary walks on the latter: in the former, escape from your sister-sufferer is as impossible as from your room-mate in a Main double. Had Elizabeth been twice as fastidious as she was, and Lydia only one-half as likable, they needs must have fraternized, in the endless afternoons, when all books are taken away by the inexorable Mrs. Flett, and you are told to "rest without talking." It is difficult to get around that order in the Infirmary proper, where a watchful nurse keeps guard in the next room, and where even a whisper seems to carry miles. But in the "pest-house" vigilance is relaxed, and much may be done

in the way of personal adventures: tales of what my father said and my sister did; comparisons of ideas on College; and, after a suitable time, like Punch's "pretty little dears," the tragedy of one another's lives.

If Lydia made round eyes over Elizabeth, Elizabeth opened hers equally over Lydia. Here was a girl who had never travelled, never been part of any sort of social life, never known any cultivated, interesting people, who had never owned a visiting card, never heard of a golf tea nor a Paris hat nor a theatre party, to whom most of Elizabeth's daily life at home was as foreign as that in Manila, who was yet gentle-mannered, refined, "a lady." It was very instructive to Elizabeth. She asked Lydia, as directly as she thought in accordance with good breeding, if there were any more in the world like her. She played with her as a child might with a toy of new and unsuspected mechanism.

Even in the confidences of the twilight before dinner came up, or the last talks as they lay in bed, Lydia never mentioned her lonely, friendless year. Elizabeth understood, how-

ever, the little jerks in stories, the eloquent silences that meant "here others speak of their friends, I have none."

"I wish Myra could see me," she thought one night. "I am being broadened by the minute. It's like what they say of College Settlements, the chief good is to the settlers. If Barbara Sterling, and Lois, and Bert could know a girl like Lydia, it would just stretch their horizon line till it would have to give. They shall know her; she'll be as educative as English A." Then the sight of Lydia's face, which seemed to her sharpened eyes to have a wistfulness in it, "They shall know her because she is a dear girl who is just pining for fun and a lot of burblers, she's nice enough to be any one's friend. The girls just must be friendly and jolly to her."

Elizabeth went first. Poor Lydia trembled and quivered all day, thinking of her goodbye.

"We'll have a party at my house to celebrate our discharge."

Would she do it? Would she invite the alien, the stranger to it?

"Be careful you don't get cold, and come back if you feel badly," said the nurse at the Infirmary door.

Lydia was free. She walked down the corridor towards her own house. Chapel was just over. The girls were flooding the stairs, talking in a way that would have told a Vassarite, even if their pretty light gowns had not, that it was Saturday night. Lydia, dressed in a sensible, hideous gray wrapper, shrank against the wall. There it went,—the clan,—Bert, Lois, Betty, Arna, Neil, arms on one another's shoulders, laughing, playing, joking in that maddeningly self-sufficient way it always had. She felt, as a hundred times before, that she must thrust herself violently in among them, crying, "You shall know I am a human being."

She opened her door. The gas was lighted, and a bowl of violets stood in the centre of the table. Elizabeth was kneeling at the desk, writing a note. She took Lydia's hand, and held it between both hers.

"The ball is over at my house. I was

just writing your invitation, for fear you wouldn't see it on your block. Come on."

"Oh, I can't this way," looking from her wrapper to Elizabeth's evening dress. One never associated shops with Elizabeth's gowns, or so much a yard. They were as if formed mysteriously for her in ways wholly pleasant to the beholder.

"All the more fun. You're just out of the Infirmary."

Not that, but the thought that it was more as if she were really of the clan to go so, decided Lydia.

It was a very lively, gay "ball," as crowded as most balls are, as sixteen girls were seated in a room rather a tight fit for one, and with far more to eat than the usual reveller finds. Lydia said little, ate next to nothing, and laughed constantly, as often with astonishment as with amusement. They were so unlike any one she had ever met, these girls who were so alarmingly frank with one another, so whimsical, so full of alluring freaks and fancies. For all their *camaraderie* she felt out of it all, like

some guest of Elizabeth's who could not be expected to enter into the fun thoroughly.

Elizabeth stood Lydia's unwearied friend, and Elizabeth was a great lady in the clan. Therefore it was friends with Lydia. She was not lonely now. She drifted in and out of girls' rooms; lay on their couches, eating fudges and listening to their stories; sat on the window-ledges, between classes, discussing all the mighty issues of College; was hail-fellow-well-met with them all. Sometimes Lydia was so happy she would laugh aloud and whisper to herself, "This is fulness of life."

But there were other times when she had that old subtle feeling of the first night's "ball," that she was not really one of them; that she would always be just on the verge of the real intimate life of these girls. This feeling took shape in her mind as a necessity to be gayer, more ready for fun, more willing to stop work for any pretext than the others. Barbara, Margaret, Bert, might be cross or low-spirited or hidden behind "Engaged": she could not be. Her place was

not the impregnable one theirs was. The girls must not think her stupid or a grind. It would take so little to lose the hold she had on that gay little world. She was a guest there, liked and enjoyed, but not one of the true household: she must be compliant, like a guest.

This cost a good deal of time, and Lydia's work suffered. It cost money, besides; for most of the girls were rich, and spent money in ways that seemed to Lydia's frugal New England habit of mind little less than unbridled prodigality. Those who could not afford the spreads in their rooms, the dinners at Smith's, the trips to New York, the drives about the country, the constant spending of money, said with cheerful frankness, "I am poor. I cannot do that, or go there." Either they remained at home, without losing any one's liking, or some Mæcenas in the clan "paid the freight." Lydia had not the courage to do like them. She had been brought up by people who would have been ashamed to give lack of money as a reason for not doing a thing,

even though it were the correct one. She felt, too, that here again she could not be as one of them. They would take it amiss if she refused to join the fun because of its extravagance.

If the old saying about a friend at court be true, it surely applies to one's success outside the court as much as that within. When "the swells" became friends to Lydia, the girls in all the sets of the class discovered how desirable an acquaintance she was. That does not say that they were mean-spirited, but that they lacked independence, or in many cases had really never heard of her. Lydia was at her best with the ones whose manners and customs were more akin to her own than were those of the girls she admired so greatly. They admired her, too, for underneath her shyness she had a good amount of force, and her mind was developing into a rather remarkable one.

"Lydia," said a girl putting her head in the door one day, "want to walk with me? I'd like to have a business discussion with you."

"Come in after Chapel, Jean. I've been making up Gym. cuts till I'm that tired I couldn't creep down to first if I was paid."

After Chapel Jean came around to the room, bringing Eleanor Fonce with her, or rather the latter brought the former, for Jean was a mild soul who enjoyed being led, and Eleanor was a little shrew of a girl, never happy unless stirring up somebody or something.

"Now, Lydia Waitely, what do you think about this committee deal at the last class meeting?" began Eleanor, seating herself with a snap and fixing her bright eyes on Lydia.

"Um,—well, it was a deal sure enough, but don't you think it was involuntary?" cautiously.

"Involuntary!" with contempt. "Every time I nominated one of our girls, Elsie Gifford would nominate another of us, then Florence Hillis would nominate one of their set. Of course our votes were split between our two girls, and so their candidate was elected every time. I'm good enough friends

with Elsie and Florence and that lot, though we don't trot in the same class exactly, but I hate this way they have of trying to run the class, as if because they wanted a thing so, that was the only way it could be done."

"I don't think they try to manage things and keep all the offices to themselves any more than Elizabeth Forsythe's set. They act—er—they're awfully nice girls, every one knows that,—but you don't like to have the nicest girls act so well—orderly, do you?" Jean's voice, bold at the start, tailed off miserably. Lydia thrilled with happiness. Jean had remembered her hostess's alliance with the Forsythe set.

"Now, I tell you what those Giffords and Putnams and that ilk are about. They're pretty sure we will put up a girl for class president, then they'll put up another of us, and then they'll put up one of themselves. Our votes will divide, of course, just as they did last night, theirs won't. Besides, they'll have all the votes of your friends, Lydia, for they'll never vote for us. They think we're grinds and pokes and that sort of thing."

Eleanor's face grew redder and redder as she talked, her voice had an angry twang.

"But, Eleanor, maybe those girls will put up Sally Dean or Bert Alden. Then we'll have as good a chance as any faction," said Jean.

"No, we won't. Because our girls are so weak-spirited they either don't vote at all, or so senseless they vote for their friends instead of uniting on one girl to beat the machine."

"Machine!" laughed Lydia. "What's your party but a machine, too?"

"We're an organization," hotly. "We don't care whether our girl or somebody else's girl gets the place as long as it's the *best* girl. But we're not willing to admit that a girl from one of those two sets is the best girl just because she comes from them. See?"

"Are you speaking editorially, Eleanor?" asked Lydia.

"You know as well as I do that two-thirds of the class are outside of those two sets, the swell one and the lively one, if you

want to have a name for them. Do you, Lydia Waitely, honestly think it's fair for the minority to shut out the majority, when that is just as clever and capable, only not so pushing. Do you?"

"No, I don't, Eleanor! I'll do what I can against it. What's your plan?"

"This. You run for president."

"Me?" with more amazement than elegance.

"Yes, you. All our girls like and respect you, so you're sure of our votes. Then Elizabeth Forsythe will vote for you; and, if she does, Myra Hume will of course, and Bert Alden. If Bert does, Betty Blake will, and, oh! all the others in that camp about. You can defeat any Gifford candidate ever made; and, even if the Giffords and the Forsythes do join against you, I think there's enough of us to elect you."

Lydia stared at her visitors helplessly. Was it just a year ago this very month that she had cried herself to sleep in the Infirmary, a friendless Freshman?

Jean and Eleanor stayed an hour talking



The Gymnasium

elections in general, Lydia's own in particular. When they left, she was aroused with a righteous heat against all wire-pullers save those who pull for a noble end. This was strengthened by a remark she overheard on the corridor below, where she had gone to borrow a book, having decided to study a bit now the serious business of the evening was over. The speaker was Elsie Gifford. She was laughing exultantly with another girl as they drank at the "fountain of learning," otherwise the water-cooler.

"Smooth wasn't the word for it! Every time Eleanor Fonce nominated one of her friends, I nominated another and split the party like a knife."

Elsie had been mean purposely! Lydia was determined to win if she could. She hated that spirit of crowding out really fine girls from all positions simply because they were not of a certain social order.

For a week Eleanor, her henchman Jean, and another fiery agitator, Mary Veach, electioneered for Lydia. The girls of their camp were enthusiastic for her, they re-

ported. Some of those who did not know her even came to her to tell her they should vote for her because they thought she stood for no one party, but for all. Lydia hardly slept or ate, she was so excited. Surely, this was "fulness of life."

"Girls,"—it was an excited Sophomore who burst into Elizabeth Forsythe's room one morning,—“do you know what's going to happen at the election?”

Elizabeth, Myra, Lydia, and Bert Alden were coaching one another up in Sophomore Argumentation for a next hour recitation. They dropped the "Case of Evans" immediately, however, to consider the far more important case of the next class president.

"Miss Fonce and her friends are going to nominate some one of themselves and elect her, too, Elsie Gifford told me. She hasn't found out who it is yet; but she says the girl will win, whoever she is, because all those queer, drab girls nobody knows are sure to vote for her. Think of having Miss Hillyer or the delightful Evelina Larned for president and representative of our class!"

"They won't put up any one like that, you foolish party," said Myra. "It will probably be Leslie Owen or Miss Pelton."

"There isn't a girl among them really fit for president," scolded the bearer of evil tidings.

"Whom do you want?" asked Lydia, with an effort. She had meant to say "we." The other came out of itself.

"Why, Emily Fullham, of course. She's bright, chock full of business, and popular with every one. And isn't she a stunner to look at! She's done heaps for the class. Those other girls want her, too. They say, if we'll vote for May Gifford for *Miscellany* editor, they'll vote for Em for president."

Straightway all tongues fell a-wagging till the bell announced that the "Case of Evans" must at last get a hearing.

Lydia sat in the class, with her eyes riveted on the A's, B's, and C's with which the professor was marking on the board as with mile-stones the progress of the famous Burke's speech. But what point in Mr. Evans's career seemed best denoted by A

and what by B she could never tell, for she was trying the case of Lydia Waitely against Emily Fullham.

She did not like Emily, but the class adored her. Emily was one of its charter members, so to speak. In an issue between them the girl known and loved from the beginning of Freshman year would have all the advantage over one brought in towards the close. Then, too, if she were nominated by Eleanor Fonce, she would stand out at once as a candidate from another party, the "Uitlanders." The girls would be enraged at her. Some of them might drop her as a traitor. Elizabeth cared more for Emily than for her; and Elizabeth was dear to Lydia, not only as her patron, but as the strongest and sweetest girl she had ever known.

Yet she had consented to be the candidate for the Uitlanders, had made small campaign speeches in girls' rooms. Moreover, she really felt that the right lay with them. The clan and the Giffords (the party taking its name from the two sisters who were

its leaders) did try to manage the class for its own interest and did trample down the mild, unassertive grinds. There was pleasure in the thought, too, much pleasure, in being president. Outsiders would never know how she came to be elected. For them she would shine as elected because she was tremendously popular. Yet Lydia, like a wise girl, knew that it is only your place in the class that counts, after all.

Her duty? her desire? Lydia had been taught to decide all questions by the first; but then she had never before experienced "fulness of life."

The rank and file of the Uitlanders were angry and surprised, the leaders were furious and amazed, when Lydia took them her refusal to run for president. It was a gloomy conference. Lydia went from it to an exam. — the Mid-years had just begun — with the feeling that she was a criminal and a blunderer.

"Lydia!" "Lyddy!" "Oh, Lydia, you nice old bun!" "Come in, Lydia, and celebrate!" clamored all sorts of voices, as she passed a room on her way from Chapel.

"We've heard about you," cried Sally Dean, hugging as far up as she could reach,—"how the Fonce and the Veach wanted you to run for president, but how you wouldn't because you wanted little Em'ly, just like the rest of us."

"We heard! We heard!" came the chorus. Every girl present seized some portion of Lydia, and hugged it or shook it or pounded it. She was hustled on to the couch, fed with candy, and made to listen to every one's opinion of the coming election as one whose appreciation was worth having.

Lydia looked about the room filled with all the girls with whom a year ago she had so longed to be friends. They were seated at her feet, beside her, on her. She thought of the influence and position she had given up. She remembered a sentence from Mary Wilkins's "A New England Nun." She whispered to herself, with a queer smile, "She had sold her birthright for a mess of pottage, but, then, the pottage was so sweet."

What was left of the week Lydia consecrated to exams. The excitement of the coming election had crowded those usually mighty events into the background. She had played all the year. She now set about doing the work of three months in three days. As this is never accomplished successfully, except by geniuses, and college boys in their own accounts of themselves, Lydia trembled for the outcome.

Saturday night she came up from a day in New York. She had "bunted" joyously with some chosen spirits and had been royally happy till she began to ask herself, as the train reached about Newburg, "Where has all my money gone?" By that system of mental accounts made up of "seventy-five cents for my new tie," "ten to the porter," "five, and five, and five for car-fare," she discovered the path by which each dollar had slipped away. But to that other sadder question, "Why, oh, why, did I spend so much?" she could find no answer.

On her couch lay a pile of letters, from home, from College, in the treasurer's hand,

and — ah! three others also unstamped. The treasurer's letter contained no news, only an unpleasant reminder, in the form of an itemized statement, of her debt to Vassar, composed of an Infirmary bill, and money borrowed, the amount in all of a hundred dollars. Lydia had never owed twenty cents till she came to College. Moreover, the pressure of a debt depends not on its own weight, but on the strength of the purse which sustains it. Lydia's was feeble.

The first little envelope enclosed the card of one of the English professors, on which was written : —

“Miss Waitely will please present herself for re-examination in English B, April 17.”

The second had a printed form : —

“I regret to state that Miss Waitely's [her name filled in] work in Physics is deficient,” signed by the professor.

The third was a letter covering three pages, in which “my dear girl” and “my young friend” was informed of the how, why, and how much she had failed in Greek, and urged to devote herself earnestly to the

task of making up the work, thus learning Greek and cultivating character at the same time.

"Shall I tack these up on the wall the way Mary Wilkes did?" she said aloud with a forlorn smile.

Her mother's letter had no comfort. Business was bad, her father's illness had been expensive: would she be unhappy if she had a much smaller allowance the rest of the year and no new clothes? Everything would be brighter in the fall.

"Flunked three studies! Owe a hundred dollars! No money coming! It's hideous!" Then, as laughter and voices sounded down the corridor, "I don't care! It was worth it!"

Then she went to bed, and, being not yet twenty-one, immediately to sleep.

Lydia told no one her troubles, for she had the New England power "to burn her own smoke." She faced the situation pluckily. Through her own choice, conscious if not deliberate, she was three subjects behind the class and in debt. She must make up the

subjects; she must earn the hundred dollars. No more fun with any one. Henceforth she would be numbered among the grinds, the shabby, over-worked, worried ones; for there are degrees even in the state of grinds. How would the clan act to her now? That troubled Lydia more than how she could raise a hundred dollars.

Spring—the coaxing, alluring spring—had come. Other people played about in the beautiful outdoors and were happy after their several kinds. Lydia toiled and moiled, shut up in her little room behind a huge “Engaged.” She began to work every day at six; she worked between breakfast and first recitation, between fourth hour and luncheon, between dinner and Chapel. This last was the hardest of all; for she could hear the girls as they strolled by arm in arm under her window, and see them as they played games out on the campus. She worked all Sunday and all Saturday. She began to be haggard, and her clothes had the appearance of having been put on with one hand while she took notes on some-

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Raymond

thing with the other. When she went to walk, she analyzed subjects for argumentation or recited physics' formulæ. By June she was only half an inch from brain fever. But she had made the class again, and had lessened her debt two-thirds.

"Will you please tell us," Betty Blake had said, seizing upon Lydia one day early in March, "why you've turned from an attractive young Personality into a dun-colored Intellectualness?"

"I'm studying Greek. I want to know more about it."

"Well," quoted Betty, "'I am sorry indeed that I have no Greek; but I should be sorrier still if I were dead.' That's what you'll be if you keep on a-grindin'-of at such a fierce rate."

"Lydia Waitely," said Barbara Sterling, "none of us see you any more, ever. Why do you shut yourself up so?"

"Lyddy!" cried Emily Fullham. Lydia hated to be nicknamed. "You must be dead set on an honor, or you'd never work so like a little dog."

"Come play, honey," coaxed another.

"No time."

"Time was made for slaves."

"I am a slave."

Even Elizabeth Forsythe, who usually thought other people as capable of managing their own affairs as she could be for them, wrote on Lydia's block, "Nothing more moves a wise man's pity than the case of one who is in too much hurry to be learned."

After a bit the clan ceased to trouble about her. They liked her still, but she was as if out of College. She never came their way, and, when they went to her, she did not want to see them. Even at the table she was too absorbed to talk or to listen.

Her Junior year Lydia drew a room in Raymond. The clan was in Strong, the Giffords held Main. Raymond had the greater number of the class. Differences of buildings are nearly as differences of miles at College. Lydia seldom saw her old friends except going to and from recitations.

She had never really belonged to them: she could not, by her very nature, become one of them. Perhaps, like Dr. Johnson's Scotchman, if she had been caught young, much might have been made of her in that direction. But she was too old when she entered College. She knew all this,—that, if she had been really one of them, nothing could have separated her from them. As it was, her absorption in her work and then her distance were the occasions under which lay the real cause, her own character. She was neither better nor worse than they. She simply was not like them and never could be. She longed as much as ever to be one of them. But, at least, she had memories of past comradeship to console her.

She was almost as much by herself as the first year. The body of the class still thought of her as a girl in another set, who would not care to know them. She did not try, for her part. Her comfort was her work. She went into that vigorously, even lovingly, spending whole days in the library with James's Psychology or the early playwrights.

She began — she could not tell how — to feel the life of College as it is for all its members, without distinction of class or clique, to understand, albeit dimly, the relation of the students to the place. Self-government committees, editorships, presidencies of student associations, did not come into being primarily, she reasoned out, to give popular girls a chance to have an outward and visible sign of their hold on the affections of two hundred or so others, nor ambitious little Napoleons a field in which to show how they could handle their fellow-beings, but that the business for which Matthew Vassar builded his College might get on happily and successfully.

This was new to Lydia. Stung by the splendor of this sudden thought, she interested herself in all the clubs, committees, and organizations of College. She did not lobby nor pull wires. She was tired of that. She made speeches in class and in Student Association meetings that told for her end; all the more because, belonging to no party, she could ever speak as she believed. When

she was given a small office, as sometimes happened, she made the office tell, too. She grew to be a power, though she never suspected it.

All this time, unperceived by Lydia, the sets, factions, circles,—all the groups of girls,—were coming together in one united whole. The Class of Ninety-blank was finding itself.

One morning in April Lydia was called away from breakfast to receive a telegram. Her mother was ill. She started home at once, and for a month College saw her no more.

She had no real friend there, and so she received no letters. What was there to write about, anyhow?

A soft, thick mist, through which the lights looked a queer yellow, folded itself all about College as she walked up the path from the Lodge.

“What are all the girls doing, running back and forth so much?” she thought. “It’s not Friday.”

Three Freshmen from Raymond were

coming out of the door as she entered. She knew them a little. They all laughed as they saw her, after the reasonless manner of their tribe.

"Oh, Miss Waitely, are we the first to congratulate you?"

Then they laughed again, so hard that before they caught breath a Ninety-blank ran down the stairs, carromed into Lydia, steadied herself, and cried as one word,—

"You-are-president-of-Students!"

"Students! Students!" shrieked another, sending her voice ahead of her.

"Lydia Waitely, president of Ninety-blank's Student Association!" shouted some one else. From the campus, the Library, Main, Strong, and Raymond poured in the class, and the underclassmen, — who didn't know Lydia at all, but who wanted to make a noise and shout,—and fell upon Lydia with demonstrations of joy, undignified, grateful, heart-warming.

In her absence she had been nominated as the strongest, coolest, broadest girl in the class. Elsie Gifford had run against her.

"But she never had much of a show, Lydia," explained one of the clan as she walked over towards Raymond with Lydia. "Of course the girls did talk about Elizabeth,"—the speaker lowered her voice, for Elizabeth, surrounded by friends, was just ahead,—“we do all love her so; but we all felt you were the girl for the position, Lydia.”

Lydia followed the path to Raymond alone. She had won the highest honor in College. She ought to be perfectly happy, and yet—. She stopped and looked up at Elizabeth's room. The curtains were up, and she could see it filling with girls. They were talking and laughing—bubbling—in the old dear way once a part of her College life, now out of it forever.

"We all do love Elizabeth, but you were the girl for the position," she repeated. "I wonder if Elizabeth would like to change places, too."



AT THE FIRST GAME



On the way to the Circle



Watching the Basket-ball Game

At the First Game

THE first basket-ball game is the happiest of the year. It's exciting enough to be fun, but not enough to be painful. Of course you want your class to win. You can live, though, if it doesn't. Class rivalry is still in the good-natured state, later it is full of malice and all uncharitableness. Perhaps the real reason is that the first game marks the beginning of those days which are the best a girl ever knows. Spring semester at Vassar. Winter, when even the grigs grew dull, is over. The spring vacation, that mirage ever receding as you approached, is over, too ; but its rest has made a new girl of you. The June examinations are too far away, as Vassar counts time, to form even the smallest cloud on the wide, blue sky.

You know, either by experience or intuition, that, for good or ill, your class record

is closed. You will study no more this semester, till the one grand final cram for the examinations. You may take a book out under the trees, ten to one you'll never open it. You'll lie looking up at the light flickering through the tree-tops or at the new leaves, always restless, always restful, and dream, and be perfectly happy. You'll hear the birds call; and, though you can't tell for the life of you (unless you belong to the Bird Club) whether they are bobolinks or robins, you'll feel something sweet and novel set a-going within you. You'll gather flowers, the early spring ones, which you will call impartially hepaticas, to the scandal of your room-mate who once studied botany and hasn't yet recovered from it. You won't write poetry,—unless the *Miscellany* editor has a mortgage on you,—but you'll think it and live it a little.

If you are a Senior, you won't waste any of the precious college time left in just thinking. You will foregather with two or three loved friends, and talk, and talk, and *talk*. Books a little, "criticism of life," well,

maybe, if you are some kinds of a Senior,—but chiefly, and with unflagging joy, college gossip. Field Day, the games, Founders, now almost here, the Senior elections, which don't interest you greatly and which are really badly managed, the way the class has changed since Freshman year, the new self-government rules, the reason Sarah Ralph got her honor and the reason Alice Kaye didn't, the new fellowships, the new Gym floor.

It's kindly gossip now, for college is beginning to encloud itself with the golden haze through which it is to shine forever after in your eyes. Even the Faculty are covered with the mantle of charity. They mean well, poor dears, and are worthy souls in the main. Prejudiced, of course, and apt to err. Who is not? You forgive the doctor for not cabling your family, then in Europe, the night you nearly died with tonsillitis, though, miraculously, you recovered in time for Mohonk two days later. You even speak with calmness of the professor who imbittered your young life with bur-

dens grievous and heavy to bear. As for the girls, you discuss them hours on end.

All this makes part of the charm of the spring and the first game.

How good the old Oval looks filled up with girls once more! How joyful to sit down on the hardest benches man ever devised, in a sun that belongs to July properly, and gaze on the teams lying in the shade of the hedge. They are laughing and betting treats at Smith on the game. They'll never be that way again, the strain will grow too sharp, the rivalry too fierce.

You pity your room-mate, decorously seated in the shade with her mother, while all the time she yearns to be in with the girls and shout and sing. You, who are clad in the Vassar uniform of golf skirt and shirt waist, regard with contempt those clothesome ones, who, "variously bedecked and be-devilled" in frilly, ribbony things, sit in the shade to the left. Your heart softens, however, as you see the little manager of your team, flipping about in a train several inches longer than herself. You feel the bond be-

tween the old and new as you never did at an alumnæ meeting, when you hear the mother, who has gray hair and graduated in '70, say, "I wish I'd had a chance to play basket ball."

The girl next you twitches your arm. Poor Ruth! behold her skirting the edge of things with a man. He is only the second most interesting, and she has struggled to foist him off on somebody, anybody. Men are dear and desirable beasties, but, oh! not at Vassar. If they would only be more "chirk," and pluck up a bit of spirit while there; but they wear such an "oh-for-a-man-and-a-brother" expression. There is a tale of a man who left his hat in the Senior parlor, which was then vacant. When he returned, girls had entered the rooms, myriads of them. They blocked the door, they hovered over the hat, concealed beneath a table. He reasoned with his hostess, and he pleaded with her. Then he went home without the hat.

Your neighbor is beginning a man tale bristling with "he saids" and "I saids"—Hark! the Freshmen are cheering,—

“ Green but vigorous,
Superfine ” —

and the Sophomores answer,—

“ We’re first-rate,
We’re first-rate.”

Then the Juniors, your class, begin to sing,

“ Once more we’ll meet them,
Once more defeat them,
Passing the ball, just as of yore.
Bartlett will dare them,
Lefflinwell scare them.
How in the world did you find that out?
Done — it — before.”

Nannie Parkin jumps up in front of the benches. Nannie’s voice, she says herself, “is something fierce.”

“ Now then, girls ! ”

“ Class of Ninety-blank, just gone ’long,
Class of Ninety-blank, just gone ’long,
Class of Ninety-blank, just gone ’long,
A-cheerin’ for its team.
Oh, raise up your voices now,
Raise up your voices now,
And cheer right lustily.”

Nannie's voice is raised till the surrounding atmosphere quivers.

"Here come the team. Cheer 'em !
Now, one, two,—keep your voices down like
a man's, and don't shriek."

"Hikey ! hikey ! hurrah !
Ninety-blank !"

In spite of Nannie's admonition the cheer is pretty shrill. Just as much loyalty goes with it as if it were in double-bass, however.

The teams are out, the Seniors in blue and red, the Juniors in blue and white. There's Nell, the Junior pitcher, big and slow, but, if once her hands get on the ball, into the basket it goes. There's Adelaide, too, springing about as if she were a mass of feathers. And Lou, in the old red suit, that is the team mascot. Look at Julia, banged already. She has the worst luck ! Last year she broke her nose, and jumped up shouting, "Come on, I've only blacked my eye." What's the matter with May ? and Jo ? and Marion ? and anybody ? They're all right. The spectators are tell-

ing each other so as fast and as loud as they can. The classes are all right, too, and the college, and the game, and even the professor umpire, chosen for his placid soul and inability to be bullied.

The umpire throws up the ball, the captains jump for it, the sides rush forward, the game is on. Then every one shouts and cheers, to encourage the team they say, really because they can't keep still. One girl calls to the players by name. She is suppressed. "Don't rattle the man at the bat." Every one is hot, stiff, stepped on by excited friends, mauled by the players in their rush for the ball, and gloriously happy.

All but Betty Blake. She is miserable. That is all wrong. A basket-ball player has no right to any emotion save devotion to the ball, and Betty is on the team. She is angry; not passionately, excitedly, but with a kind of freezing fury that makes her very body cold. She has been so since two weeks ago to-morrow, which is Sunday.

Now Sunday is an unpopular day at

Vassar. Various reasons are assigned for this, as compulsory church, Sunday night tea, home letters, and other things which never happen week-days. It's sufficient explanation to say it comes after Saturday and before Monday.

This particular Sunday Betty had begun to scold her room-mate. There was nothing new about that. The room-mate was irritating and lovable, a not unusual combination among Vassar or other women. Betty adored her. She bore with her with beautiful resignation twenty-nine days a month, the thirtieth she scolded her soundly. Janet, that was the room-mate, accepted the scolding sweetly, then went on being as irritating as before. It was a kind of bargain between them. This Sunday lecture was only two weeks removed from the last going over, therefore Janet resented it. They fought, decently at first, afterwards not. Betty, blazing and stammering, hurled insulting accusations at Janet, who, white and level-voiced, replied with cruel sarcasm. They had not spoken since.

Once in the dark, when Betty lay curled up in a corner of the couch, Janet had stolen in and knelt beside her.

"I was wrong," she had whispered, "I was most to blame, I am sorry."

Betty had stared down into her eyes, very large and soft in the twilight, and had hated her with all her strength. Janet had not tried again.

Betty had played on her class team ever since she entered college. She was little and light, but tremendously quick and plucky. Janet, belonging to the class above, though the strongest girl in it, had never played until the previous fall, and then only on the scrub. This was her first match. The girls laughed at the Senior-Junior friendship, "wait till you play against one another in the games." Betty and Janet had grinned at one another. Now Betty's one thought was to beat Janet. She hated the Senior team because Janet was on it. Some way it was always Janet and she that rushed for the ball at the same time. When the umpire decided for her, she felt a

thrill of triumphant hate that turned her hot all over. She watched Janet's every movement. Look at that throw! and how steady Jan was in passing! Why, she, Betty, might practise ten years before she could crack the ball —

"Wake up, Betty Blake!" shouted some one, not in anger, but in sorrow, for Betty usually "played ball from the ground up," and was therefore beloved.

Betty realized that for one golden second the ball had been hers. She had only stared stupidly at it. Janet had it now by the Senior goal. Betty joined the guards, who were leaping, and striking at the air, to catch it the instant it left Janet's hands. Oh, yes, Jan was a cool one. She wasn't going to be rattled into a weak throw nor forced to hold the ball over time. She tossed it and caught it and tossed it again. If she could only wrench it out of her hands!

"O—h!" every one was calling in amazed protest. Betty knew then that she had sprung upon Janet and torn the ball furiously from her. She was called the "whit-

est" player on the Oval, yet she had done what was as ridiculous as it was unfair. She watched the try for goal gained on her foul with something like murder in her heart.

"What's the matter with Betty?" ran along the benches. Betty heard it. No one answered, "She's all right." They only shrugged, and shook their heads.

"Keep cool, Bet," whispered her manager, as the teams rested between innings, "Just play like you used to, and we'll beat the earth."

"You've got to take a brace, though; you're no good so far," said the captain with frankness.

Betty said nothing. She looked over at Janet, and thought, "I'll kill her." The thought shocked her a little, not much. Nothing mattered but her awful anger.

The first inning had been played warily. Now the pace was furious. Both teams played desperately in the desire to score. Some one made a swift throw for the basket. The ball went wild in among the benches. Three girls rushed for it, heads down, Janet

in front. The bench under which the ball was still rolling was a heavy iron one from way over by Music Hall. Its sharp, hard corner projected sideways almost like a spike. The first girl to plunge under it would strike it with immense force, that of her own impetus and that of the weight of the two girls behind. Basket ball is not fraught with perils; as a rule, a big bruise or a lame ankle being the usual casualties. But, if a girl's head met that iron, something was going to break.

No one seemed to notice the bench. Betty did. She stood in just the position, parallel to it, to see its projection. Jan wouldn't be killed, but she'd be hurt, and that in Jan's case was as bad. For Janet was a coward, a cry-baby, a muff. She wept and shrieked over a cut or a burn. She mourned for days over the mere memory of past suffering. Betty, brought up with, or by, boys who regarded girls as on a par with caterpillars, had been forced to learn the stoicism of a red Indian in order to be even tolerated. Her friend's weakness scandal-

ized her. She concealed it as she would have kleptomania. Janet was ashamed of it herself. Luck and an extreme canniness in exposing herself to danger had kept her secret. The class were proud of her as a model athlete, strong, cool, and brave. Jan would scream and tear up the grass and disgrace herself generally. The Juniors would pity her. Betty could not endure pity. The Seniors would never look upon her in just the same way again. Oh, Fate was bringing a sweet revenge.

All that, so long in the telling, clicked through Betty's mind in a flash. Then something older than her hatred, older than that dreary Sunday, older even than her class spirit, hurled her in sideways between bench and girls. Her body sprawled out along the iron frame something after the manner of a fender.

The three girls rose at once, though two of them would have preferred to remain on the ground till such time as their breath returned unto them. Betty sat up. She wasn't at all pale, and she smiled cheerfully.

This was really rather good even for a red Indian; for she was just coming out of the state described by Kipling as "having left your stomach behind you," and was entering another caused by the two knee bones grinding over one another as they departed from their socket. This latter sensation needs to be experienced to be appreciated. She looked around for Janet. All her hatred seemed gone; and as for her anger, why, that was weeks ago. Jan was good old Jan, and she had just wadded herself in between that dear old tab and — suppose she hadn't jumped quick. The thought made her sicker than all her pain.

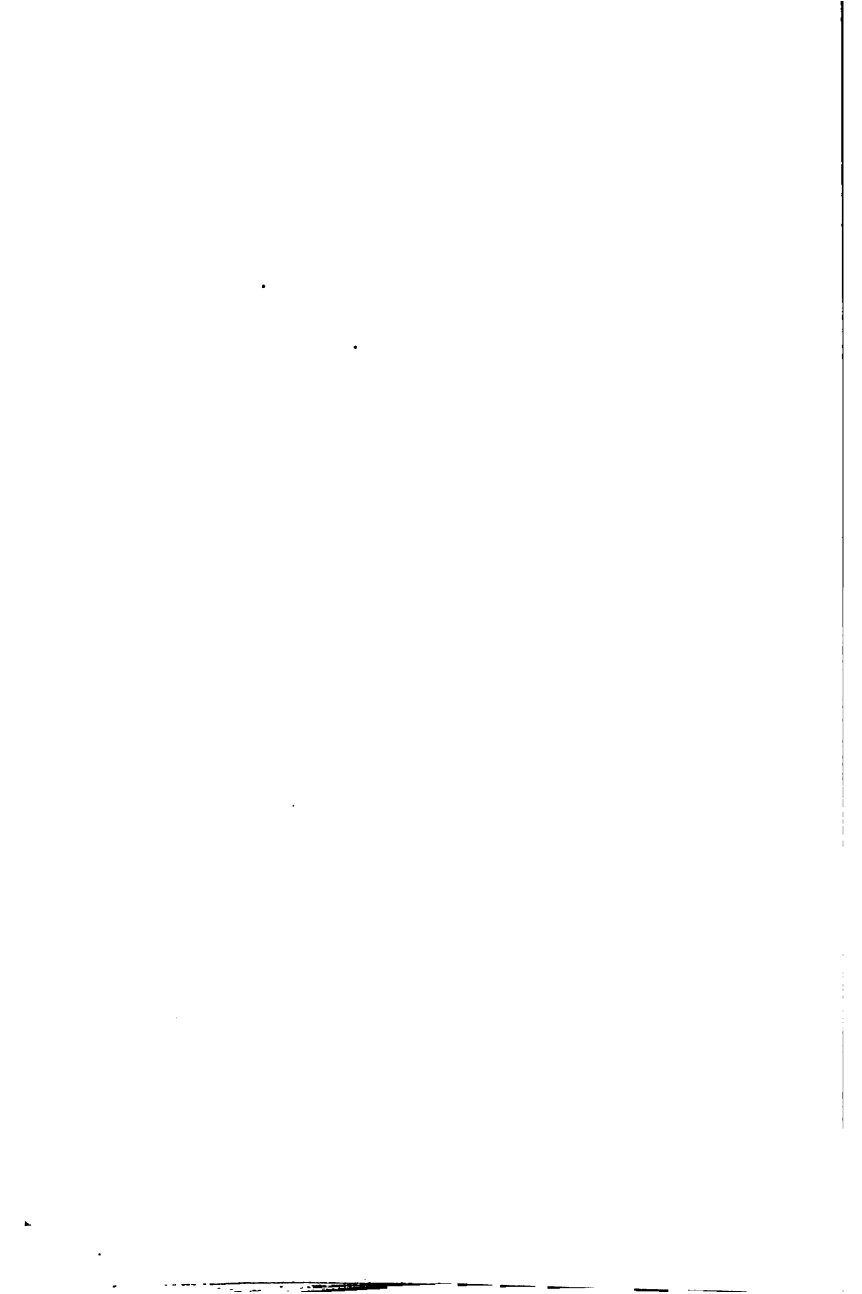
"You needn't get out a search warrant for broken bones, because there ain't none," she said to Janet, who was feeling her with strong, soft hands. "I've jagged my knee, that's all."

Helping hands bundled the invalid, who had been wheeled to the game, out on a bench, and brought the infirmity chair up to Betty. She remarked in crisp tones to the girl who carelessly banged her knee on

the wheel, "I'll bat you if you do that again." This showed she was her own man once more. Janet smiled lovingly. She didn't look deep into Betty's eyes nor press her hand, because she wasn't some one in a book. She ran back to the team, calling, "See you in the infirmary when this 's over.

And Betty answered with the old fierceness dear to Janet's heart, "You shan't! Get rubbed down, and go to bed."

ON BACCALAUREATE SUNDAY







Chapel

On Baccalaureate Sunday

BACCALAUREATE Sunday that year was a beautiful day. The air was soft and warm, sporty little breezes frisked in and out among the trees, and long, cool shadows, made by the far-off June clouds, lay over the campus. The trees were white, pink, and palest yellow with blossoms, which smelled sweet as far as you could see them. Little, late violets pied with purple the deep green of the Oval. The campus stretching out beyond Strong to the Pines was white with daisies. All the prim little flower-beds which Henry, the college gardener, minds so carefully, had bloomed out with a brave array of pansies, roses, and lilies. Birds called to one another in shy voices, and butterflies drifted dreamily about.

Every one who could was out doors, and on Baccalaureate Sunday that means all

College. It is the last Sunday that year for the underclassmen, therefore they wish to make the most of it. But for the Seniors it is the very last day of College; they cling to it lovingly, pathetically. For to-morrow will come flooding in the hordes of mothers, sisters, brothers, and an occasional bored father to take possession of the college and the collegians. Vassar Commencement week is pretty and interesting to the old grads., but it is not home. The holiday air, the many strangers, the alumnæ of other, far-back classes, even the girls themselves in an unceasing condition of good clothes and good manners, make it a different place to those who love it best as it is every day for nine months in the year,—noisy, rushing, busy, absorbed in itself, and heedless of the outside world.

Ninety-blank in its youth had been rent by schisms, over its three candidates for class presidents, its inability to get everybody to mutiny at the same time against the Powers, and other weighty matters. But it had been welded together by pressure

from without; for the other classes considered it unduly pleased with itself, and the Faculty objected to its attitude of "have yez a governmint? thin I'm agin ut." All of which rejoiced Ninety-blank, who dreaded naught but indifference. Now not even the scars of the old wounds remained, the class was at one, united on the common ground of love for itself as the brightest, most independent, most original class that ever entered College. It dated a decided change in College life from its arrival, and spoke of itself, in the unabashed frankness natural to it, as the bridge between the old order and the new. Other classes have thought the same, and in a sense it is true of each. All the spring the girls had been seeing as much of one another as they could, against the time when the hard separation would come.

This Sunday groups of threes, fours, and fives, were starting out in all directions, some for a last walk up the shady road past the Farms, some to cut 'cross country to Sunrise Hill, or the queer slope somewhere over by the Fair Grounds, others to lie on

the grass back of the Observatory, or in the shady nooks near the Gym. Their arms were around one another's shoulders. They were talking and laughing as carelessly as if College had just begun for them. Each girl realized, with a faltering heart, that before her lay Class Supper, the happiest, the saddest night in her College life, and the unlightened gloom of "pack-up Thursday," but each girl had resolved to pretend just one day longer that the joy of College wasn't all over forever.

Early in the spring the talk had been chiefly of "jobs" for next year. Rich and poor alike were fired to enter upon some gainful pursuit. At one time it seemed as if all Ninety-blank wished to teach the young. Knots of girls gathered in the corridors discussing the relative virtues of Fisk's Agency or Mrs. Young-Fulton's, and on entering a Senior's room the visitor would be greeted by, "Say, do you think six hundred dollars, and board in the school, is good?" "If you were I, would you dare attempt to teach three subjects you don't know a word about?"

Now each girl had either obtained the desire of her heart or was waiting till fall to make another try at it. The question of a career troubled the air no more. Friends were making mutual plans for the summer and consoling one another with promises of letters, those miserable makeshifts for daily companionship. Those who lived in the same State were rejoicing that some Vassarites would be near them with whom they could have miniature class reunions once in a while. Those who lived in remote and inaccessible regions were bewailing, like Sally Dean, "There isn't a blamed girl within a thousand miles of me."

Dearest of all to the class this last day were the reminiscences of its past. The girls repeated to one another the old jokes, laughed at first in Freshman year, the old passwords, and the dear old stories. They grew incoherent with laughter over recollections of the night they broke up the Senior Howl with a larger and squarer one of their own; over their Tree Ceremonies and the "ball" that followed; over Junior year at Strong, when

the foundations of the building and of Self-Government were visibly affected; over the spread at Mrs. McGlynn's after they won the championship in basket ball. They recounted to one another, with tears of joy, their sufferings Sophomore year over "oral quizzes" endured with only one other victim, their toils over the series of maps which were supposed to illumine for them the darkness of mediæval history, their shame, at the end of the Sophomore Mid-years, when, in obedience to a summons, they slunk stealthily down to Room 79, and their amazement when they saw in the corridor outside sixty other girls likewise abashed and furtive. An outsider would not have understood nor been amused. But they loved it all with their whole hearts. Then, when their breath failed, they would take hold of one another hard with a sudden chill realization that it was all over now, the work and the fun, the happy-go-lucky, free, careless, warm life of College. Oh, yes, there were "gude times" coming, they knew, but they would not be College ones. They would be dignified,

sensible women of the outside world, in a little house in a little corner of that world somewhere; and gone forever would be the dear old tribal life with its all things in common, from ideas to umbrellas, its intense happiness and its woes so overwhelmingly great that they were almost a kind of pleasure, its hail-fellow-well-met acquaintances, and its close, enduring friendships. "A woman may be an angel some time, but she can never be a girl again." And girlhood at Vassar is such a gift!

Kate Holabush sat on one of the seats under the pines which border the walk past the Gym. On this day of universal companionship she was alone. There was no one she wished especially to be with, nor any one, she knew, who wished to be with her. Like the Miller of the Dee, she cared for nobody, no, not she, and nobody cared for her. Which, when you think of it, is about as sad a state of things as can be, only Kate had never looked at it that way. She was not one of those drab persons whom no one likes because no one ever

really distinguishes them from the surrounding atmosphere. Kate was the sort that is felt the moment it enters the room. She had a fine mind, a lively wit, and a pretty face. Moreover, she could do a great many things,—sing, sketch, play the guitar, act, write dainty verse and readable prose—extremely well, was always artistically dressed, and had the graceful manner of a woman used to the world.

She had entered College under disadvantages. She was a Special until the middle of her second year, when she joined the Sophomores. The class never took her to itself as one of “us.” She was unfortunate, too, in living in one of the cottages across the Lake where she was the only boarder. When she came over to the College, she lived in a single. Yet it was more than the ill-luck of those early years, hard to overcome as that is, that made Kate absolutely friendless.

Some said it was because they did not like her habit of ridiculing everything and everybody, nor the little sarcastic smile which she

always wore when talking. Others thought her hard and cold-natured, still others that she was "fast," in desire they must have meant, for at Vassar no girl is fast in act. She cannot be. There is no chance. Most of them, however, merely shrugged and said,

"Oh, I don't know. I just don't like her, that's all."

Kate never troubled herself to find out the reason. She knew she was disliked, and she had no rosy illusions about being a misunderstood genius or a spirit too delicate for the crowd. She rather looked down on the girls, as crude and immature, and supposed that they resented the attitude. She was fond of quoting Stevenson when she saw them ramping with excitement over some College affair or deep in woe for a small cause, "Youth was a great time, but somewhat fussy." "Naturally," she thought, "they don't like me."

She was not lonely: she had too much to do. Her work interested her, and she spent a good deal of time on it. The unresting *Miscellany* and *Vassarion* editors claimed her

for stories and illustrations. She also wrote for the papers often and for some of the less known magazines. Her cleverness made people want her for Hall Plays, Phil. committees, and Chapter Cup competitions. She was always invited to the big spreads and formal teas. These things took the place, with Kate Holabush, of friends.

So she felt no envy as she watched the girls go swinging by together. She didn't want to link arms with Sarah Ralph, and Molly Omstead, and Barbara Sterling. Sarah was wearisomely intense. She talked about "subjectivity" and "objectivity," "mentality" and "physicality," topics which bored Kate. Molly was decidedly amateur yet in her efforts to think. Barbara was unbearable with her lack of humor and her ever present morals.

The girls greeted her as they passed. Two of them, moved by the new feeling of kinship, stopped to talk. They even asked her to walk with them, up through the Pines, behind the bridge. Kate did not go.

Left to herself, she pulled a letter out

from between the leaves of the book she had been making a pretence of reading. Two little lines came between her eyes, and she poked the ground with the toe of her shoe. The letter was from the editor of a paper in an Eastern city, who had often published her articles, offering her a position. The paper was called a literary one, but its sale was due to the society gossip which filled its columns. This latter was always impertinent, often scandalous. She was asked to be the editor of this department, the gatherer up and putter into amusing form of all the little intimate news of the place,—the shadier, the better. She had a cousin on the paper. He had suggested her to take the place of the former editor, because, as she was informed, her youth and personal appearance would make it possible for her to go to many places closed against a less attractive reporter, and thus to gain more news.

It was not a nice position. Kate winced as she thought of pushing herself in among perfect strangers to find out their private affairs, and then writing them up in a cheap,

newspaper style. She had dreamed of quite a different life when she was out of college. But it was a chance to be in a city that possessed many of what people call "attractions." She could go to concerts, lectures, the theatre, she would have time to keep up her other writing and the studying she enjoyed. Most important of all, the salary was large, immense it seemed in Kate's eyes.

If any of the girls had stopped to think about it, they would have said that Kate Holabush was rich. Her room, her way of dressing, her lavishness with money, her ease with all the elegancies of living, seemed to prove this.

Really, Kate was the daughter of a poor lawyer in some out-of-the-way town. She had come to college on a little legacy left her by her grandfather. Her work for the magazines, skill in making a little money go a long way, and a winter in New York with a gay aunt, accounted for the rest. She neither would nor could depend on her parents after leaving college, there were younger sisters who must be educated. She was wise

enough to know that the success as a writer which buys pretty gowns at Vassar is nevertheless not great enough to pay all one's bills outside of college. What could she do? Teach? She could have a place in a public school. She had no wish to feed childish minds and see them grow, and the yards of red tape which she knew she must unroll every day in such work made her shiver. She could help her father in his office. She hated the dull little town and all its wearisome inhabitants.

Here was her chance to escape drudgery and make a fortune, quick. What if it were a rather shabby sort of position? Greater minds than hers had stooped lower. It was a good push up. Her work there would count with other editors. She would save her salary and start out for something better in a year or two. She need never think of this mean position the minute she was out of it. She could

“Rise by its aid
And its aid disown.”

She had until the end of the week to think it over. Her decision was made now.

The sun began to shine in on her through the trees. She left the bench. The shadows over by the Observatory looked pleasant. She walked toward them, trailing her light gown over the grass. She stopped for an instant to watch a party of girls coming down the path and held back the bough of a fir-tree to see them better. Her tall, slim figure in its faint green draperies defined against the darkness of the firs made a charming little picture. It might have been another of Christina Emmet Sherwood's "Ladies in Green." A puffy old gentleman, passing, saw her, and exclaimed to his companion, "A sweet girl-graduate."

Kate heard him. "Sweet girl-graduate!" she murmured with angry contempt for the ridiculous, hackneyed expression. "Why are Such allowed to exist?"

If the worthy old gentleman could have seen her face as she spoke, he would have taken back his opinion with speed.

Kate continued slowly across the grass.

She failed to notice, until full upon them, a clump of girls stretched out under the trees.

"Hello, Kate Holabush," called one, "come play with us."

To her surprise, and she could see to theirs, as well, Kate sat down.

"Have a pillow," said Sally Dean, pushing one toward her. "We're talking about careers, who in the school we think will have them."

"Who do you think?" asked Janet Pomeroy.

Kate laughed, "I —"

"You can't tell a thing about it," broke in Betty Blake. "My sister says the geniuses of her class, the ones everybody expected would astonish the world, never did a blessed thing but get married."

"Yes, and some mouse of a girl that never opens her mouth in class or anywhere else will do some great stunt," said Sarah Ralph.

"All the same I believe Arna Kellar will be something unusual," said Janet.

"Will be! She is now," said Sarah.

"Our class are going to do queer, interesting things," said Sally quickly to turn the talk from Arna, whose experience was apt to provoke discussion.

"I tell you what, sirs, its a terrible response, as our gardener says, to be Vassar College's keeper," said Sarah solemnly. "You know what I mean. To think you stand for the higher education of women as Vassar recognizes it."

"Sarah!" cried Betty, "never, never did I think I'd hear you use that loathsome expression, 'the higher education of women'! It sounds like—oh, nobody must ever say it. It brands a person if she does."

"Isn't it absurd and old-fashioned!" agreed Sally. "But all the same I know just what Sarah means. Oh, the woes I suffer for college when I'm home. I live in a town where not one man in a hundred goes to college, and I, even I, am the only girl that's ever been. The people act and talk as if I were some kind of a strange fowl, like Dr. Holmes's Huma. They send over to ask me how to pronounce new words,

and whether they should say 'nayther, me wages *is* low,' after the manner of the Irishman in my fondly loved, if ancient, tale. I don't know if they really do have such a respect for my supposed learning or if they just think they have to pretend to. Last summer one of them introduced me to a whole porchful of strangers as 'my friend, Miss Dean, from Vassar.' Imagine any one introducing my brother as 'Mr. Dean from Yale.' There was a woman present, too, who has forgotten more than I'll ever know. She probably thought me a regular want-wit that believed four years in college equalled brains, and cultivation and travel, and —"

"Come live with me, dear, if you're troubled that way," said Janet as Sally's breath seemed to run out. "No girl *my* friends ever knew has been to college except myself. But they don't look upon me as any marvel. They and their sisters, and their daughters, have all had three or four years' travel in Europe with governesses, lessons with masters, private lectures, etc. They regard college as excellent for girls

who have to be teachers, or for those who have no opportunities of any kind at home. But for others! — My family think it's a kind of bear-garden. They watch me to see me grip my meat firmly in my hands, and I know it's a surprise every time they observe me come downstairs, they look for my descent via the banisters."

"Well! if they are your family, they're very narrow-minded!" cried Sarah, voicing the general rage at this unheard of view of women's colleges.

Janet laughed. "I just wanted you to see the responsibility I have to college. I not only have to live up to a high standard, as Sally does, but I have to hold up the standard besides."

"I wish," it was the slow voice of Molly Omstead, "I could do something for college. I'm proud of it. I think it's great even if your New Yorkers don't, Jan., and I wish I could make it say 'good girl, Molly,' about me. But I'm so awful ordinary! I can't do anything. Much as ever I got through my Senior Finals. I want to do something, if I only could!"

"Start a school of athletics for women in Oakland," said Sally.

"No, start a Woman's Exchange," said Norma Willett, a quiet girl who never said much, "where you tote cakes from Mrs. McGlynn's, bring huge bundles from town, sit up all night with quiddly girls, make everybody's bed, wash all the dishes from your neighbors' spreads, and do little things like that for nothing."

The others all smiled at Molly. Kate thought, with a sudden odd little feeling, that no girl, not even her sisters, had ever looked at her just that way.

"I tell you," went on Molly as if she had been disputed, "I just love old Vassar."

"I do honestly think that every woman who is trying to be broader-minded, and higher-idealed, and sweeter-lived is on trial, not only for herself, but for her theories. So is every man. We do represent Vassar's ideals. We don't stand or fall for ourselves any more, but for it. It — it — frightens me, but I'm glad, too. I hope I won't disgrace it." Janet paused, a little red in the face.

She had followed Stevenson's advice, "When you are ashamed to speak, always speak."

No one answered. They were all thinking with Janet, but had not her courage. The sudden onslaught of a girl calling,

"Janet Pomeroy! Betty! Sally! someone is in the parlor to see you," was welcome.

"It's my family!"

"And my sisters."

"And my brother."

The others jumped up, too, to find out if any of their guests had come on the same train. Only Molly stayed behind with Kate. The former lay on her back, looking up at the sky. She rolled over suddenly and, propping her chin in her hands, said, quickly and shyly,

"I want to tell you. When they were all talking about the girls who are going to succeed and make the college proud, I thought of you, right off. You're so talented and energetic and — Oh, I know you'll do a big thing all right. I want to congratulate you beforehand,—and College."

"Thank you," said Kate. She could not, for once in her life, think of any neat and appropriate reply. Molly's candid gray eyes disconcerted her as much as the speech surprised her.

"I wanted to tell you," repeated the other with boyish awkwardness. "Guess I'll take a tramp now, good-bye." She started off with the abruptness startling to non-Vassarites.

Kate sat and thought. This idea of obligation and responsibility to College was new to her. Molly had focussed it from the general to the particular, too. Probably in every boy's life there is a moment when he first feels the stir of that illogical emotion known as patriotism. Kate was recognizing the existence of what is a sort of patriotism. If she did not experience the emotion herself, at least she had become aware of it in others.

That night, as she sat in the darkened chapel listening to the organ recital, the conversation of the afternoon came back to her, intensified in force because all wound

about with music. She had talent, undoubtedly, a little at any rate. She could do something not unworthy what Janet had called Vassar ideals. Her position as news-monger for a third-rate paper! That was a work any college should be proud to have its graduates enter, truly! Doubtless she would be pointed out next year as a noble illustration of what Vassar could accomplish! For fully a minute Kate felt hot with shame that was not all for herself. Then she forgot all about it in listening to a favorite *largo*. Yet just then college loyalty was born within her. Tiny as the least of all seeds it was, but there none the less.

It was a "persistent cat," that conversation. Kate thought of it the next day when her guests, troops of relatives invited with the expectation that they would refuse, but who had accepted instead, and friends of her year in New York, began to arrive. Even the labor of reconciling the elderly ones to the extraordinary lodgings provided for them in out-of-the-way cottages, and of showing the younger ones the sights, did not wholly distract her.

Commencement week is a rush from Monday morning, when people begin to appear, to Thursday afternoon, when you sink a tearful, lifeless wreck in the train which is to take you home.

Kate had more of the excitement and life than most of the others. Besides her guests, among whom were a couple of exceedingly likable young men, she was to play at the concert Monday night, attend the Alumnæ luncheon Tuesday in virtue of her position as president of a club, be one of the two class historians Tuesday at the Class Day exercises, and sing Commencement between two of the speeches, to relieve the strain on the parents, who are not accustomed to consider Colonial Expansion, the Poetry of Thucydides, the Function of the Novel, and the Relation of Mathematics to Life, all in one morning.

Kate was perfectly cool as she walked in the long, gay procession winding out of Main around the campus to the platform in front of the great semicircle laid out in the shadow of Chapel. She had spent weeks on

her speech. She knew it by heart, she had repeated it over so many, many times that it ran of itself. Kate was not the sort of girl to be stage-struck, either. The class had pronounced unqualified praise on her gown, which was all lace and ribbons and graceful folds and soft color effects.

Her election to this place was one of the many acts of Ninety-blank which showed its devotion to its honor and fame. Betty Blake was much more beloved, so was Janet Pomeroy, than either Kate or the other historian. But the class knew those two were the ones to do it most credit, and so their election had been unanimous. Kate had determined to exceed even its expectation of her.

When, as her cultivated, distinct voice went on, she saw both the old classes present, too remote in time to be interested in Ninety-blank, and the new ones, so near that they were hostile, begin to laugh and clap enthusiastically, she felt that delicious thrill which is the reward of none save the public speaker. She had looked forward to

it. Yet it was so different from all her other former appearances had produced in her. She found herself thinking even as she talked.

"Oh, now, you see Ninety-blank can do something besides make a noise and win championships."

This was surely queer for Kate.

She paused an instant at the end of her speech. All the audience was laughing and applauding now. She could see mothers who knew little of college, and fathers who cared less, beaming and pounding. Girls and men from other colleges, and those from none, nodded and fanned with enjoyment. She had achieved a triumph, a college speech which appealed to the outside world. She heard a man close to the platform say,

"Mighty clever, that!"

Kate wanted to lean over to him and cry, "This is the kind of thing Vassar College does for a girl. Do you wonder we're proud of her?"

But Kate had never been proud of her till that minute. The four steps backward from

her position to her seat in the ranks made a patriot out of an alien. She enjoyed the evening's reception immensely. It is a monstrosity of a girl who does not like to have clever people seek her out in the midst of a crowd to tell her that she has been witty, and interesting, and altogether charming. With Kate this praise had the effect of a tribute to her virtue. Had she not shown college in a good light?

Commencement was over. So was the Class Supper, nearly. The flowers that filled Strong dining-room were beginning to fade, the pink-shaded candles on the long table flickered uncertainly. Every one had laughed and cheered and sung throughout the whole feast. Now the toasts were over, the girls were up for the last songs, the class one and Alma Mater. Each girl crossed hands, her left hand to her right neighbor, her right to her left. Then they all swung back and forth in one great circle, and sang till the walls echoed. There are a great many verses to the class song. Someway, as the fifth and sixth were sung, the

volume of sound grew fainter and lower. Only a few voices took up Alma Mater, and those failed pitifully at the end.

"Now, then, let's cheer our president," cried the toastmaster huskily.

Everybody looked at the little president, whose face was hidden in the shadow of a great bunch of roses she had just raised. The sight of her rallied the class. It cheered as of old.

"Now, the College," said the president. The roses shook in her hand. Every one cheered.

"Now, Ninety-blank, God bless it!"

No sound followed. The circle broke. Some of the girls dropped into the chairs, put their heads down on the table, and cried openly like little children. Others made for the corridors and the dark of the campus. It was all over forever. There was no more Ninety-blank!

Kate had sung with the others. When Alma Mater was begun, she had noticed how the hand holding one of hers tightened and how the voice on the other side trembled.

The girl opposite was looking straight down at the table, the light showed how her face quivered. Kate stopped singing. What had she missed in college that these girls had gained? What was there in it that made them love it so passionately? She had taken an honor, that girl over there with her face buried in the shoulder of her neighbor had flunked three exams, yet the other had won something which she did not even understand. Tears rose to Kate's own eyes, not for what she was losing, but for what she had never owned. Was she a stranger to all the real meaning of college as she was to the sadness of this night? Was it nothing to her after these four years? Had she none of it to call her own, now that it could never come back?

The responsibility to College! The talk with the girls and Molly Sunday! And then her position on the paper! They all flashed into her mind, and stayed there. Here, at least, was something she had caught from those flying years, something as much hers as it was any of the sorrowful

girls. She had lost — she knew not what — only that it seemed very beautiful and precious to the others. But the honor of the college, the power to raise or lower its name, was hers equally with them. The logic of all that was, to her, to refuse the position, which unworthy herself was unworthy Vassar.

She walked back to Main behind the silent, dismal groups of girls. She felt really gay. For the first time in her life she knew what college spirit meant. Once in a while she lamented her folly inwardly and she smiled derisively at it all. But the happiness remained.

She lighted the gas and began to pack for an early departure. No girl, however balanced she is or however limited her time, thinks of packing till after Class Supper. Then she wrote a polite note to the editor, declining his offer.

“I’ll post it the first thing in the morning. No, I won’t. If I wait till then, my common sense — or what’s left of it after this week — will prevent me. If I’m not

a fool right away now, I'll never have the courage to be again."

She dressed herself carefully,— Kate would have been well-dressed at a fire, or an earthquake even,—and crept downstairs. The night had gone, day had not yet come. It was that queer, unreal time just at dawn. Kate ran down the path to the Lodge and out along the road to Arlington as long as her breath held out. After that she walked swiftly till she came to the letter-box by the grocery store. She dropped the letter in the box.

"There! it's gone!" she said, adding whimsically, "I suppose I can telegraph, 'Pay no attention to letter. I accept.'"

Broad day had come when she walked slowly up from the Lodge. The reaction from her exciting week was beginning to steal over her, she was dead tired. She stood still on the walk. Old Main was before her, silent, big, impressive, its dark red sides hidden under thick green ivy, its towers beginning to gleam with the first touch of the sun.

You might fight against it, or you might ignore it, but in the end College would conquer you, "to have and to hold" always. Kate laughed out at the thought like a little girl, then whispered, with an actual blush, Molly's words:—

"I just love old Vassar."

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